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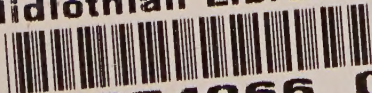
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ALMOND OF LORETTO

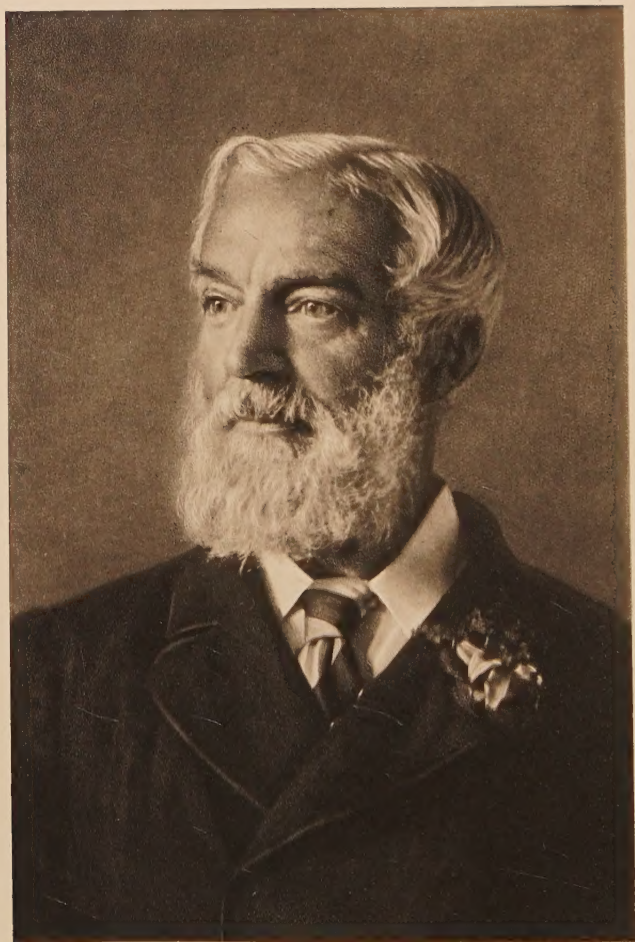


Photo. Elliot and Fry.

H. H. ALMOND.
IN 1895.

ALMOND OF LORETTO

BEING THE LIFE AND A SELECTION FROM

THE LETTERS OF

HELY HUTCHINSON ALMOND

M.A. GLASGOW; M.A. OXON.; LL.D. GLASGOW

HEADMASTER OF LORETTO SCHOOL (1862-1903)

BY

ROBERT JAMESON MACKENZIE

M.A. OXON.

LATE RECTOR OF THE EDINBURGH ACADEMY

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P R E F A C E

IN sending this book to the press, I take the opportunity of thanking the many pupils and friends of Dr. Almond who have supplied me with letters and illustrative matter ; and, in particular, the Editors of the *Times*, *Scotsman*, *Spectator*, *Journal of Education*, *Health*, *Field*, *Broad Arrow*, and *Tatler*, for their kind permission to publish letters addressed to them. To the writers in the little volume entitled *Some Memories of the Head*, I am indebted for much excellent material ; and my special acknowledgments are due to Mr. Andrew Lang for the reminiscences of 'the H.M,' which brighten some of the following pages ; to Mr. Oliphant Smith for the interesting and helpful appreciation of Almond which he sent me ; to Mr. Ian Little, whose amusing account of the Head at 'Doubles' I was reluctantly obliged to sacrifice, along with much other valued matter, to the need of reducing the size of the book ; to Mr. Donald Mackenzie, W.S., Mr. C. W. Cathcart, F.R.C.S., and Mr. H. B. Tristram, Headmaster of Loretto School, who assisted me in many ways ; to Emeritus-Professor Lewis Campbell ; Sir James King, Bart. ; Mr. A. Beatson Bell, Advocate ; Mr. Warwick P. Boustead ; Mr. E. P. Rouse ; Mr. John Kerr, LL.D. ; Mr. Clement Dukes, M.D. ; Mr. C. C. Cotterill ; Professor G. G. Ramsay, LL.D. ; Miss Mackay, Loch Inver ; Mr. W. J. Laidlay ; Mr. J. A. Harvie-Brown of Dunipace ; Mr. J. G. Walker ; Mr. Richard Tomlinson ; Mr. John Ross, Inveran ; and to Mrs. Almond, the chief of my helpers, who has done all in her power to make this

volume a worthy memorial of her husband. This long tale of indebtedness may be brought to a close by the expression of my thanks to Mr. J. Hepburn Millar, Advocate, whose literary knowledge and acumen, most kindly put at my service for the reading of proof-sheets, have effected considerable improvements in the work.

The pressure on space above referred to obliged me to reject a number of letters well worthy of publication. But it is to be hoped that enough have been included to enable the reader to judge of the joyous vigour and racy humour of the Head's style.

With regard to the text of the letters, a brief explanation is required. In his private correspondence Almond was a swift and careless penman. He frequently began a new sentence with a new line, and, within the sentence itself, made the dash do duty for commas, semicolons, and colons. Many of the letters, again, have been reproduced from type-written copies, and in these the rapidity of his dictation and the occasional illegibility of his rough drafts resulted at times in sentences which had obviously something wrong. He corrected these errors in the posted copy, but left them, as a rule, unamended in the copy retained. I was thus obliged, in most cases, to punctuate and paragraph the letters which he had written with his own hand ; and, in the typed copies, to restore occasionally what seemed to be the original phrase. The latter alterations, however, were, I think, in every instance trivial ; and I have not thought it necessary always to enclose them in square brackets.

In cases where it was desirable to conceal and at the same time to distinguish names, the initial letters employed are not always the same as the first letters of the actual names.

I thought that I had concluded my acknowledgments when I finished the first paragraph of this preface. But there is a debt which my desire, in this work, to act as

literary showman merely has led me to forget. I refer to my own obligation to the subject of this memoir. How great the debt has been is perhaps apparent in the book itself. Indeed it can scarcely be otherwise. So close and continual, during the receptive years of boyhood, was my intercourse with Almond, so constant has been our companionship of late, that in all my mental colloquies I seem to hear the accents of his voice; which spoke, indeed, of many things in an almost infinite variety, but was, in its abiding tones, a trumpet-call, ringing out clear summons to the slumbering soul to wake, and live with the vehement life of those who fight for causes—to fling itself against the fortresses of the nation's unhappiness, to beat down the strongholds of the world's unreason.

R. J. MACKENZIE.

September 1905.

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INTRODUCTORY

UPON many a morning during the last few years of the bygone century, a stranger to Musselburgh, taking his walk by the side of the river Esk as it flows through that ancient town, might have observed, a few minutes before half-past nine o'clock, an old gentleman trotting briskly across the Iron Bridge with a big boy at his heels. The old gentleman is in stature somewhat below the middle height, but powerfully built—limbs a trifle heavy, shoulders rather round and sloping. He has a noble face, were there time to study it—a bronzed look of health, a massive brow, light-blue glancing eyes of which the usual expression is one of fun and frankness, a strong nose straight or slightly aquiline, a fine white beard, and, to crown all, a beautiful head of silvery white hair, which is remarked the more easily as he wears no hat. Unless the weather is particularly cold, he wears no coat or waistcoat either; but carries the former, which is of rough tweed, over his arm. His shirt is of flannel, grey or white, and unconfined at the throat by stud or necktie. Trousers also are of flannel, and, unless fastened across, as they sometimes are, upon the first brace button, seem to hold upon rather a precarious tenure, and bag a good deal at the ankles over a pair of wonderful, crescent-shaped shoes.

The old gentleman is beaming with good-humour, as he trots along; and, every now and then, flings back over his shoulder some quick remark to his companion, who, also hatless, coatless, and flannelled, has a much more serious aspect than his senior, and seems to be anxious to secure his attention for the transaction of necessary business. Presently they disappear round the corner of Mill Hill.

If we should follow the pair to Loretto, and contrive to conceal ourselves in an odd corner of the school hall, we should see the old gentleman, still coatless, standing by the fireplace, and expounding, with extraordinary point and vigour, some great passage of the Scriptures to a hundred white-clad boys. As the morning wore on, we might, if we took our stand in the orchard, observe him pacing slowly up and down the 'Woody Walk,' discussing with old boy, or parent, or master some deep question of religion, or social philosophy, or school discipline. Or again, if the season suited, and our affairs let us stay till the afternoon, we might find him, much spruced up in dress, among the primroses or rhododendrons in Dalkeith Park, engaged in eager conversation with a couple of half-grown lads who seem to listen and reply to him without the least thought of distance ; or seated, it may be, in the arbour that overlooks the meeting of the waters, smoking a tranquillising pipe, and still talking, infinitely talking to his companions, of all things under heaven.

The old gentleman had had no very remarkable success in life from a material point of view. He had been a Scotch schoolmaster all his days, and his school had never numbered a hundred and fifty boys. He had made no figure in general society, and it was only of recent years that he had begun to attract much attention in the great world that thinks (or, at least, writes) upon education. But he was one of those original men who have power to break up the barren crust of convention with the ploughshare of new ideas ; and when he died a couple of years ago, it seemed to those that knew and loved him best, and to some whose professional experience had given them the right to form an opinion, that his life should not be left without a memorial ; and, in particular, that the ideas for which he had lived, and the results which he had achieved in the way of realising these ideas were worthy of a wider currency than he himself had been able to give them. Hence the project of having his Life written—a pious duty which the present writer was asked to perform, and felt he could not refuse. If, as the result of his efforts to discharge

it, some recognisable picture of a striking personality, some durable, or not altogether evanescent record of a pregnant life-work should emerge, the reader will perhaps pardon him for adding one more to the many biographies of the day.

CHAPTER I

CHILDHOOD

HELY HUTCHINSON ALMOND was born in Glasgow on the 12th of August 1832. His father, the Rev. George Almond, had been in business up to the age of forty and a captain of the embodied militia during the Napoleonic wars, but had taken orders about the year 1820, and at the time of the boy's birth was incumbent of St. Mary's Episcopal Chapel in Glasgow. In the year 1823 he married as his second wife Christiana Georgiana, eldest daughter of Thomas Smith, barrister, London, and brought her to his house in Garnet Hill, where he lived with two grown-up daughters. His former wife had brought him nine children, of whom four survived at the date last mentioned ; but the second marriage was for long unblest with offspring, and when, in the eighth year, a son was born, he died in early infancy. Two years later there came a second child, who proved also to be the last. It is of him that this book is written.

The boy's grandfather on the Almond side was in business in Leicester, and his great-grandfather was headmaster of Derby School. Neither of them were distinguished men, nor was his father possessed of any special gifts, if we except an aptitude for saintliness. 'My father,' Almond tells us in his ironical way, 'had no great learning except of the practical part of his Bible ; in fact, he had no higher qualifications for the ministry than an average apostle.' The parental sermons, according to a surviving member of St. Mary's congregation, were far from enlivening. The child had, it seems, a general dispensation from attending to them, being permitted to read his Testament or a little volume entitled

Peep of Day the while, or perhaps even to slumber in the high-backed pew. 'Catechism after service' also would seem to have been tedious at times. There is a touch of early ingenuity in the boy's suggestion that only those children whose names began with N or M should be made to attend. Hely's general cast of feature resembles that of his father in the miniatures, but otherwise we look in vain at that prim figure in the preacher's gown and bands, or in that mild spectacled face for any hint of the unconventional vivacity of the son.

His mother in the 'seventies' was the sweetest and most refined of old ladies, very diminutive in her person and dainty in her dress, often moving swiftly from room to room of old Loretto bent on some household errand, hopping nimbly up upon a chair now and then to open a window or dust a book on a shelf. But her interests, if not wholly domestic, did not travel beyond the narrow bound of the evangelical religion of her childhood. It was not from her directly that her son derived the exceptional range and brilliancy of his intellectual endowment.

Yet if, as philosophers tell us, we are to see in each man's life but the unfolding of inherited qualities, it was from his mother's side that the spark of genius came. Several of his Smith progenitors were eminent people in their day. Samuel Smith, one of Hely's maternal great-grandfathers, was a member of Parliament and one of the Board of Directors of the East India Company. Augustus Smith, the 'King of the Scilly Isles,' as he was called, Hely's grand-uncle, belonged to this house, as did also Robert Smith, the first Baron Carrington.

But the family of his maternal grandmother, the Hon. Mary Hely-Hutchinson, who married Samuel Smith's son, Thomas, in the year 1791, contained two highly distinguished members. The first of these (the famous Provost of Trinity College and Secretary of State for Ireland, one of the strongest figures in the reckless Irish politics of his day) was her father, John Hely-Hutchinson, great-grandfather, thus, of the subject of this memoir. He was a man of much unscrupulous ability, which he devoted to the service

of the Government and the aggrandisement of his own family. His success in both endeavours is commemorated in Flood's bitter gibe that he had received 'more for ruining one kingdom than Hawke for saving three.' He was, indeed, rewarded with a multitude of offices, and finally in 1785 with the Barony of Donoughmore for his wife, and the Earldom for his eldest son.

John, the second son and our second celebrity, our hero's grand-uncle, in whose house his mother, Christiana Smith, passed much of her girlhood, succeeded to the command of the British forces in Egypt after the death of Sir Ralph Abercromby in 1801. It was to his skilful strategy that the complete discomfiture of the French in that region was due—a feat for which he received sundry honours and a pension, and, in particular, the title of Baron Hutchinson of Alexandria and Knocklofty. It may be further mentioned, as illustrating the fearless character of these Hely-Hutchinsons, that the Baron's nephew, John, afterwards third Earl of Donoughmore, had the doubtful distinction of being tried and imprisoned by court-martial in 1815 for his concern in the escape of Lavalette, who had shared the condemnation of Ney.

From these bold, brilliant Hely-Hutchinsons it may be that the subject of this memoir derived the touch of brightness and daring which belonged to his nature. In any case it is certain that he took from them his name.

To the bereaved parents this last child came as a great mercy vouchsafed to suffering folk—a gleam of pure sunshine, lighting up the dark house amid the smoke of Glasgow. He is described as 'a very pretty boy with long fair curls and charming manners,' much stopped in the streets by admiring passengers asking whose son he was, and greatly enjoying this infant court. At a very early age he showed the quickness of brain which was characteristic of his later years. He begins to learn his letters at sixteen months. At three he is at work upon the multiplication table. In view of his later attitude towards the study of geography it is a surprise to find that at five he 'understood the map of England most thoroughly,' and 'could go various

journeys from place to place without looking at the map, telling the counties through which he must pass.' At the 'Catechism after service' above referred to, he is always asked when others fail, and is never at a loss for an answer. He even has 'the second commandment at his finger-ends,' and sits there on the bench in the dim church 'impatient to be asked to say it.' At seven he consoles himself for the loss of a playmate with 'some Greek and history, and a double portion of sums,' and always returns with 'piles of prizes' from the Collegiate School, whither he early betook himself.

The home is steeped in the mild atmosphere of evangelical piety. Heaven and the angels and the poetic stories of the Bible cast their gracious influence around this childhood. If he falls out of bed, it is because 'a naughty angel' had charge of him that night. If he becomes attached to his dear nurse, Jane, he 'hopes he may sit next her in heaven.' He wonders if our earth 'is ever sent on a message, as the star that guided the wise men was,' and whether, in such a case, we should know that it was moving out of its usual course. He wants to see Goliath, but fears the giant may have left heaven before he gets there.

The tragedy of the Crucifixion has made a deep impression on his childish heart. 'No! There's no crying in heaven—I know that,' he is reported as saying, 'except the day Jesus Christ was crucified. I should think there was a great deal of crying that day.'

The spirit of the Gospel is mingled with the spirit of the Law. He wonders if his own birth on a Sunday was not a breach of Sabbath observance. He is horrified at finding himself guilty of idolatry, when, on a certain dark and perilous excursion down the forbidden staircase, he prays for protection to the 'black lady' who holds the lamps.

Even in the earliest years a subtle, questioning turn of mind exhibits itself. At five he is puzzled with the problem of personality, and asks his mother if she 'knew who he was the first time she saw him.' He wonders why Elijah left only his mantle behind him, seeing that he could have no need of clothes in heaven. On hearing the parable

of the new wine and the old wine-skins, he is surprised that our Lord, knowing all about modern bottles, should not have mentioned them. For long he maintained against his sister that he would have known the true God, even had he been born in a heathen country. But when she convinced him that this was not so, and told him something of the doctrines of Mahomet, he was quick to draw the inference. Christianity, he said, was true, so far as he could tell, and he was a Christian. But had he been born a Mahometan, he would have thought otherwise. Now Mahomet said that after death an angel comes to catechise, and see if each has been true to the one God and his Prophet. There was a chance that Mahomet was right. He read up therefore the chief doctrines of the Prophet in the Koran, lest the angel should find him unprepared. Another striking story is told of his early boyhood. He was found one day on the hearth-rug with four Bibles in front of him, busily comparing the records of certain incidents in the Gospels to see if the writers agreed. He was satisfied with the results of his childish scrutiny. Although each evangelist told the story in his own way, the general effect was harmonious.

Sometimes this active spirit leads him into 'naughty thoughts'; as, for instance, that, in the countries where they worshipped idols, the dogs and cats worshipped the true God; or that some of the Egyptians had sprinkled blood upon the door-posts, *and yet* their first-born had been slain. Or again, he had hoped that the Lord would not love him, as he did not want any chastening. His happy vision of heaven, too, was exchanged for misgiving when, at the close of the long service, his father gave out the hymn which describes the blest abode as a place

Where congregations ne'er break up,
And Sabbaths never end.

But it is chiefly at his prayers that wild fancies assail him, as we see from the following excerpt from a letter of his mother which treads the happy borderland between mirth and tears. The letter bears date June 1, 1840,

when the boy was in his eighth year: 'Now I think of it, I must tell you what Hely said to me the other night when I was putting him to bed. After rising from his prayers, he said: "I always find Satan struggles with me most when I am saying my prayers—it reminds me of Christian and Apollyon. But there are two lines of a hymn that may comfort any Christian:—

Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees.

I dare say he is often in a sad fright when he sees Christians praying. . . ." I had not been talking to him on the subject, nor had any one, which made me hope it was the spontaneous feelings of his own mind.'

O the good mother, with her prayers and longings for her son, and her careful, religious training of him—not in vain! She spoiled him, no doubt, as fond mothers will—left him undisciplined in sundry ways. But the root of the matter was here. We may see that in this boyhood the foundations of character were deeply laid.

CHAPTER II

GLASGOW AND OXFORD

IN the year 1845 Almond entered Glasgow College, which was situated at that time amid squalid surroundings in the High Street far from the noble site which it now occupies. Sir James King, who was one of his bench-fellows in the Latin and Greek classes and a very special chum, describes him at this time as 'a bright, rosy-cheeked boy who in his scarlet gown and Glengarry bonnet looked younger than his years.' Even in those days of early studentship it was evidence of the precocity of his talents that, at the time of his entrance, he was no more than thirteen years of age.

The professorate of the day included several teachers of the highest celebrity. Among them may be mentioned the Greek professor, Lushington, 'wearing all his weight of learning lightly like a flower,' if we are to trust his great brother-in-law; and Lord Kelvin's father and predecessor in the chair of Natural Philosophy, Professor Thomson—'Old Tew,' as the students profanely called him from his Belfast pronunciation of the numeral. But the deepest impressions upon the boy's intelligence were made by Ramsay, the professor of Latin, and Buchanan—in student parlance 'Logic Bob,' who presided over the faculty of Logic. Of the brilliant vivacity and racy humour of Ramsay's style Almond would often speak in his own maturer age, and always to contrast it with the lifeless decorum of the Oxford manner. Nor could the lapse of fifty years extinguish his sense of obligation to Professor Buchanan for 'the greatest stimulus I ever got.' The following passage from a letter, written by the boy to his mother in the year 1850 or thereabouts, gives us an inter-

esting glimpse of teacher and student at work in those happy days before the love of knowledge had been supplanted by the cult of examination, when the teacher was free to teach and the student to learn :—

TO MRS. ALMOND, Costock, Loughborough.

GLASGOW, 1850 (?).

‘ . . . I don’t think I have missed or bungled anything for the last month and a half, except one technical term that I forgot, and one or two questions with regard to mistakes in exercises which nobody in my division answered. I don’t find it requires any work. Most of Buchanan’s questions rise out of something that occurs at the time, sometimes quite foreign to the subject he is immediately treating of. For instance, an exercise was read the writer of which chose as his subject something about cause and effect. In it he mentioned the dogma which some have supported, viz., that a cause resembles its effect. Buchanan said that “suggested a good question” to him, and he should put it to the whole Middle Division. He asked for an example from the philosophy of the mind which clearly contradicted this opinion. After several had tried it and failed, I gave him the example of anger. They cannot allege that the thing we are angry at has any resemblance to the feeling of anger. This was right, and rather a good question, as there are few instances which clearly decide the question. I merely give you this (and I am afraid it has tired you), as an example of the kind of questions we have, and the various ways in which he sets our wits to work.’

Young as Almond was, he took an excellent place in all the subjects of his study. At fourteen he gained the Cowan Gold Medal in the Blackstone Latin Examination—a notable feat, of which echoes used still to reach our ears at Loretto a score of years later, when Glasgow parents came about the School—and, in the following sessions, was awarded the first prize in the classes of Greek and Junior Mathematics, and the second in the Logic class. An ardent passion for study

fired the boy's mind in those years, a passion which was by no means confined to Logic or Latin. On a certain occasion, he told me, a professor ('Old Tew' or another) had given out a mathematical problem which was afterwards admitted to be beyond the abilities of the class. Almond's determination to solve it kept him from his rest. Night after night he would rise from his bed, and work at it for hours. The methods of the Glasgow University of that day were not calculated to produce fine scholarship. They did not aim, indeed, at turning out completed products of any kind. But they were eminently suited to convey a wide intellectual stimulus, and to this particular student thoroughly congenial. 'I thank my stars,' he writes, at a time when these eager college days were nothing but a distant memory, 'that I never did a paper-work examination from thirteen to nearly eighteen, and that such an amount of life and interest was thrown into my work.'

Nor was he without student companionship. His friendship with Sir James King has been already mentioned. Professor Lewis Campbell, who was slightly his senior at Glasgow College, tells of keen arguments, mostly, it would seem, upon Church subjects, at the house of Miss Macleod, aunt of the famous Norman, with whom Campbell and Andrew Beatson Bell, afterwards Chief Prison Commissioner for Scotland, boarded. The honours of these discussions commonly rested with James Bennie, sometime Canon of Peterborough, who was a capital debater. But Almond, as one would expect, 'always took a line of his own, to which he held persistently with much ingenuity.'

It was upon the physical side that the main defect of the Glasgow training lay. Mr. Bell, indeed, mentions 'walks upon Saturdays,' and, in the spring-time, boating excursions upon the river, in which he, Almond, Bennie, and Lewis Campbell would join, and row commonly 'as far as Dalmar-nock bridge.' But the general sentiment of the citizens was opposed to athletic exercise for the young, as Almond himself tells us in a reference to his Glasgow experience: 'A few enthusiasts took to rowing on the Clyde. One of them was capsized, and as if an immersion in that mixture

of fluids wasn't punishment enough, the poor fellow was pilloried in a Glasgow paper for amusing himself when he ought to have been at his studies.' Recreation was hard to come by, and Almond's health, not naturally robust, during those years was far from strong. Chicken-feeding, the only outdoor pursuit he mentions as occupying him in Glasgow, was not likely much to improve it, and although three of the summer months were passed in the Highlands, where, in the streams of Arran, or Arrochar, he learned that love of angling which was a lifelong refreshment to him, the stores of the holiday were spent long before the end of the College session. 'I went from Glasgow,' he writes, 'a pale-faced student, having had nothing to do with my afternoons but roam aimlessly about streets and roads. . . . I have no hesitation in saying that, but for the boats, etc., at Oxford, I could have had no hold as a schoolmaster, and but insufficient vigour for the work of life.'

No account of a university course of the day would be complete which did not contain some reference to conflicts with the civic authorities. For the following picturesque reminiscence I am indebted to the pen of Sir James King : 'The Junior Latin class met all through the winter 7.30 A.M. . . . A small bell tinkled at the College to indicate the approach of the hour, and after it had rung for three minutes, the door was closed, and entrance became impossible. At so early an hour every minute was valuable. It was therefore important to take the shortest way in coming from the west, and a lane leading from Albion Street to College Street proved a god-send to the late student. For more than a generation this 'Inkle Factory Lane' had been available, and almost every one took advantage of it. But one morning, without notice, a large number of students passing through it found the exit into College Street barricaded, and a printed notice in large letters, 'Private road. No passage.' The Latin class on that morning was a small one, and the students, as a body, took up the assertion of their rights. Seniors and Juniors alike marched to the offending barricades, battered them down, and broke them into fragments. After satisfying their indignation they

marched in procession through the city, and coming into collision with the police, a few unimportant blows were exchanged. In the end the police, whose numbers had been largely reinforced, captured eleven prisoners, Hely Almond, whose bravery had been very conspicuous, being one of the number. They were summoned to appear before the sitting magistrate on the following morning, and the fines imposed were cheerfully paid by their admiring fellow-students on behalf of the martyrs. The battle was fully chronicled and the prowess of the eleven celebrated, both in prose and verse, in the columns of the *College Squib* and the *Glasgow Punch*. It is interesting to find Almond at this early stage thus romantically vindicating a right of public way.

In the summer of 1850 Almond was elected to a Snell Exhibition, and proceeded to Balliol College, Oxford, in the autumn of that year. He was kindly received by the Master, Dr. Jenkyns. 'I observe,' said the courteous old gentleman, 'that your name is Hely Hutchinson. Was there not once a member of your family here?' 'Yes,' replied Almond, 'my uncle John was at Balliol.' 'I am glad to hear that you have such a respectable relative,' rejoined the Master graciously, 'such a highly respectable relative.' In spite of this encouraging introduction, Almond did not enjoy his Oxford life. 'Do you know I hated Oxford,' he writes during his last illness to a Balliol contemporary. 'There was an absence of, and a dislike of, enthusiasm and originality which always rubbed me up the wrong way.' The Balliol tutors of the time, able and devoted as the best of them were, quite failed to understand or appreciate him. His own waywardness and irregularity, it may be readily imagined, did little to conciliate them. He was never a man whom it was practicable to freeze, and the sarcastic chill of what is known as 'the donnish manner' hurt and repelled him. In his third year he had thoughts of reading for a Second in Classical Moderations, and asked the Moderations tutor if he could tell him what were his weakest points. 'Indeed, Mr. Almond,' replied the don, with subtle emphasis, 'it is a difficult matter to say what are your weakest points!' 'Jowett told me I had no chance of a

Second in Classical Moderations,' he writes, 'and I got a First to spite him.' There is a legend of his meeting the future Master after the list came out, and pointing morals, it may be with too little reserve. But the Mathematical Moderations tutor, afterwards the celebrated Professor Henry Smith, was equally at fault. He took infinite pains with his pupil, but had the poorest opinion of his chances. He was utterly amazed when Almond came out the only First Classman of the year.

To be at odds with the authorities at times commends a man to his fellows. But among the undergraduates of Balliol Almond found himself, to use his own phrase, 'an outsider.' He suffered much from the miseries of shyness. He used to fancy that everybody was looking at him in chapel. For the incessant social interchange of an Oxford college his secluded life in Glasgow—an only son with sisters years his seniors—had been but a poor preparation. At no period of his life was he at ease in general society.

The temper of his fellow-students ran much to scepticism and freethought. In this new atmosphere the evangelical beliefs of his boyhood melted away. His life, though not immoral, was, during much of his time, reckless and irregular. 'If I lived as you do,' said Mr. George Brodric to him one day, 'I should be dead in six months.' He read hard, but fitfully. His success in gaining two First Classes in Moderations, a feat then for the first time performed by a Balliol man, made him quite the hero of the summer term of 1853. But in the Classical and Mathematical Final Schools, where his chances were looked upon with much more favour, ill health in the latter case, and a sudden change in the philosophical profession of the examination in the former put him into the Second Class.

But for these and other disappointments of his Oxford career Almond was consoled by the joyous exercise of boating. He devoted himself to it with such perseverance as to win his place in the Balliol Eight. To the 'pale-faced student,' who had spent his afternoons in aimless wanderings about the streets of Glasgow, the river was a revelation. It is not too much to say that it opened his mind to the exist-

ence of a new set of virtues. His love of open air, his passion for health, his appreciation of manly endurance, his reverence for loyalty and public spirit were to him the gifts of the river. 'As a stimulant, a safeguard, a source of delight, a thing which is now to me a joy of memory, a trainer and inspirer for life,' he writes in old age, 'the Balliol Eight did me more good than all the prizes and classes I ever won, even though work was not then the dreary, mechanical grind it has since almost wholly become.' It was with a bodily constitution much strengthened, and a character whose waywardness but awaited a call that, in the summer of 1855, Almond turned his back on Oxford, and betook himself to Torquay, where his father was spending his last years in retirement.

CHAPTER III

EARLY SCHOOLMASTERING

EDUCATION, like literature, is the common refuge of men who have found no other vocation. Almond drifted into schoolmastering. He had made an unsuccessful attempt to pass into the India Civil Service, and was enjoying his youth thereafter in a round of cricket-matches amid the green slopes and pleasant woods of Torquay, when Mr. Townsend Warner, who had a tutorial establishment in the neighbourhood, fell ill, and desired his assistance. Almond complied; found, to his surprise, that the boys liked him; felt that here, in education, there was something that might be worth a life's work—something, at all events, that interested him; and, in fine, resolved to try the venture in that field.

His fellow-Exhibitioner at Balliol and distant relative, Charles Langhorne, had recently joined his two brothers in taking over from their father, the Doctor, the management of 'Loretto House School,' as it was then called, in Midlothian. Almond was offered the post of Mathematical teacher under the new triumvirate, and betook himself to Loretto in that capacity early in the year 1857.

Of this first appearance of Almond at Loretto it is unnecessary to speak at length. The School was then little more than a preparatory for the English public schools, or for entrance, upon a somewhat low standard of attainment, at the Scottish universities, which were at that date mainly occupied, in their Arts classes, with what is now regarded as secondary school work. From the time of its establishment under Dr. Langhorne in 1829 it had always had a good social connection. Among the sixty pupils whom the Doctor handed over to his successors were a number of boys of good family.

Of the new headmasters one at least, Almond's college companion already mentioned, was an elegant and finished scholar, another was an excellent chief of commissariat. The general life of the place would seem to have been pleasant in those days. Almond taught mathematics, it is to be believed, with that bewildering rapidity which was his wont. He did much to promote a high sense of honour among the boys. He threw himself into their outdoor pursuits with an interest which was in those days quite unusual. He has mentioned to me the surprise he created when, on an early day, he hung up his cap and gown upon the park gate, and rushed off to join them in the rude football of the time.

The life of assistant masters at Loretto was much less interesting then than now. A club was formed among them for the purpose of 'driving away melancholy.' To the general effort in this direction Almond contributed the following parody, which may be taken as evidence that he had become bitten with the royal and ancient game :—

THE GOLFER'S DREAM.

I dreamt that I dwelt beside the Stand,
 With caddies and clubs by my side;
 And of all that golf-playing, club-bearing band
 That I was the hope and the pride.

I had irons and spoons such as few could boast,
 Such drivers you seldom can see;
 But I also dreamt—which pleased me most—
 That I'd done every hole in three.

I dreamt that Willie * fanned the flame
 Which was ever alive in my breast;
 And if I had only Willie's fame,
 I dreamt I could then be at rest.

I dreamt that the swells of the 'Company' came
 To see me strike off from the tee;
 But I also dreamt—which pleased me most—
 That I'd done every hole in three.

* Willie Park, the well-known professional golfer of those days, father of William Park, the present ex-champion.

Sport was not the only means which the club employed to keep themselves in spirits. There were other methods, of which the principal, as appears from the verses and prose contributions of the members, consisted in harmless flirtation with the fair of the neighbourhood, and vigorous abuse of the headmasters. To the former pastime Almond was utterly averse—he was never a ladies' man; but some humorous specimens of the latter, somewhat in the style of the Philippic Orations of Cicero, are to be found in his handwriting among the proceedings of the club. He would be a harsh Mentor who should seek to deprive assistant masters of a source of innocent recreation. The fault (if it was a fault) was amply visited upon Almond in after years.

During the summer of 1858 Almond accepted the post of second master at Merchiston under Dr. Harvey, afterwards Rector of the Edinburgh Academy. The picturesque old Castle stands on the southern fringe of Edinburgh. It is the seat of the Napier family, and from the early years of the seventeenth century has been celebrated as the scene of the studious labours of John Napier, the inventor of logarithms. Since the year 1833, when Charles Chalmers, brother of Dr. Chalmers of Disruption fame, installed his fifteen boarders there, it had been occupied as a school.

In the 'fifties' as now, Edinburgh was the headquarters in Scotland of what is known as 'secondary education.' Here in 1829 the old High School of Edinburgh had been enshrined in its noble classic temple by the provost and bailies of the city. Here in 1824 a general effort on the part of the lovers of culture in the capital had founded the Edinburgh Academy. Both schools were flourishing at the period of which we write, but neither in them nor in other less famous Scottish schools was there much to attract an able man to the teaching profession. The spoils of the mediæval Church, which Knox claimed for education, had been devoured by the nobles. There were not in the northern kingdom, as in England, ancient and wealthy foundations to confer dignity upon the vocation of teacher. The narrowness of the educational ideal, the poverty of the schools, the rudeness of the discipline at once harsh and

inefficient, the lack of organisation, had gone far to convert 'the noblest of professions' into the 'sorriest of trades.' Here and there, in the more important schools, learning and refinement struggled against adverse conditions—in some instances of rare genius perhaps even partly triumphed over them. But Sir Walter Scott, writing in 1808, finds in a 'fortunate vanity' the only motive which could induce a man who had 'arms to pare and burn a muir' to submit to the drudgery of a teacher's life; and, even so late as the 'seventies,' a well-known member of the Scottish bench was but voicing the opinion of his class when, in the writer's hearing, he expressed the hope that his son would alter his intention of becoming a schoolmaster, as it was 'no profession for a gentleman.'

But a more intelligent conception of the scope and dignity of the teaching profession had already begun to assert itself. Dr. Harvey, like Almond, had been a Glasgow student and Snell Exhibitioner, and had acquired at Oxford that wider outlook which university experience in another country seldom fails to confer. It was as the result of an effort on Dr. Harvey's part to improve the position of his masters that Almond came to Merchiston. He found there among his colleagues Mr. E. P. Rouse, one of the fellows of Trinity College, Cambridge, and afterwards for many years a master at Eton, and Mr. Rogerson, who succeeded Dr. Harvey in the headmastership of Merchiston. The school was in a prosperous condition, and numbered about a hundred boys, of whom more than eighty were boarders.

At the Castle, as at other schools, life was more picturesque then than now. The masters had, at times, somewhat romantic ways of maintaining discipline. It is related of Dr. Harvey, who was as finished a boxer as scholar, that upon one occasion he reduced a recalcitrant pupil to submission by the methods of the ring; and Mr. Rogerson, who was so skilful a stone-thrower that he had been known to bring down swallows on the wing, would playfully recall the attention of a pupil at the other end of the schoolroom by skimming a book so that it should light upon his head. Our hero's imitation of this latter feat was more productive

of mirth than study. He lacked Mr. Rogerson's Balearic accuracy. The book missed the boy, and flew through the window.

For the outdoor life of Merchiston, Almond did much. He was an ardent champion of Rugby football, which had been introduced there the winter before his arrival. But he was even more interested in cricket, which was at that time in its infancy in Scotland. In his efforts to foster a love of the game among the Merchiston boys he brought down Bentley, the well-known cricket professional, from Torquay—a plump, blue-eyed, sunny little man, as I remember him in later years at Loretto, bubbling over with racy chaff and anecdote in the musical Devonshire speech, a capital coach and bowler.

But dearly as Almond loved a good game, even at this early period it was the lessons of the playing-field that he chiefly valued. He had formed his own ideal of healthy boyhood, and set himself against all that conflicted with it. Of loafing and 'grubbing,' of lack of pluck and lack of public spirit, of 'mannishness' and low talk he was the sworn foe. It was as allies in this warfare that he welcomed games. It is interesting also to find him already using them to inculcate important habits of mind. The following highly characteristic passage is taken from an account in the *Merchiston Chronicle* of a cricket-match played upon June 9, 1860, between Merchiston and the Caledonian Club:—

'We must not for a moment be supposed to assert that success is a proof of correctness; the most truly correct play is that which strikes the balance of probabilities, and acts upon it. The extent to which this applies in cricket is one of the chief points of the magnificent training which it affords for the greater game of life. Don't be a slave to rules. Use them as short and easy *memoria technicas* of the principles on which they depend and the ends which they aim at. But always be ready to refer your actions directly to first principles. All the miserable mismanagement of red tapeism springs from a servile adherence to rules, good in ordinary circumstances, destructive when these circumstances change. Rules are simply a public nuisance, and

armies and nations, schools and clubs, would be better rid of them altogether, if they are preferred to common-sense.'

Almost the whole gospel according to Almond is contained in these vigorous sentences.

To his pupils, accustomed to regard their teachers as beings apart, to fear or to despise them, the second master was a new and surprising phenomenon. They were puzzled at first—inclined to distrust this Greek who came to them with gifts. But what boy could resist the charm of Almond's masterful simplicity? Gradually he won their confidence. Not a few of his pupils became lifelong friends, and among these may be mentioned Bishop Mylne, Mr. Donald Mackenzie, W.S., and Mr. Harvie-Brown of Dunipace.

The early years at Merchiston were a critical period in the history of his own mind. At Oxford the pendulum had swung far to the side of recklessness and infidelity. The serious influences of his childhood were now beginning to reassert themselves. He could not rest in mere godlessness. He sought a sanction for those strong convictions with which the spectacle of the boy-life of the day, rude and untended, had inspired him. He pondered long and anxiously upon questions of Christian evidence, and found but little answer. His father's life had been one of rare saintliness, and his father lay dying at Torquay. To Almond, faced with the 'endless choice,' his mind at work upon the everlasting riddle, it seemed that from that death-bed some guiding ray might shine. He had heard that sometimes to those who, in the sweet old-fashioned phrase, 'had lived very close to the Master,' a nearer vision was vouchsafed before they passed. He made a covenant with himself that if in this case such a sign should come, he would take it as an intimation that his father had not believed in vain. And so indeed it befell. There came a letter from his sister telling how she had been sitting at the bedside, as the old man's life was ebbing. And suddenly his face was all suffused with radiance, filled with a look of joy unspeakable, as of one who sees the goal of all his hopes. And Almond, receiving this message, questioned no further, but prayed with much earnestness that he might be true to

the spirit of the life which had thus ended. Such is the story, as I had it from his own lips a dozen years later, when he was preparing me for Confirmation at Loretto.

When Almond had been nearly four years at Merchiston, Dr. Harvey had thoughts of disposing of the school. He had dealings with Almond upon the subject, and the bargain was almost concluded; but for some reason never fully explained to me the negotiations were broken off. Not long after Loretto came into the market, and was purchased by Almond from the Langhorne during the summer of 1862.

CHAPTER IV

MUSSELBURGH AND LORETTO

I HAVE now conducted the reader to the scene of Almond's labours and struggles during forty years, and in order that he may form some mental picture of the region, as it was at the beginning of that period and as it is now, I would ask him, in the first place, to throw himself back in fancy to the summer of the year 1862, and to imagine that he has taken the train with me at the Waverley Station in Edinburgh, and submitted to the half-hour of easy travelling which brings us to the ancient town of Musselburgh.

The Esk is on our left hand as we leave the station, and close beside us, with its three arches and steep flight of steps, the grey old bridge, used only by foot-travellers now. The 'Meikle Bridge' they style it in the ancient records, but it looks narrow enough to the modern eye. The Romans built it first, some say, to connect their encampment on Inveresk Hill with their harbour at Fisherrow, but since the Romans fled southwards, it has been more than once rebuilt, for the last time notably in 1520. From the earliest days of the Scottish monarchy it carried the old road from Edinburgh, and has thus witnessed the pageant of most of the English and Scottish armies marching this way south or north. The hosts of the second Edward passed over it on their way to Bannockburn; the forces of James the Fourth to the 'fatal field' of Flodden; Cromwell rode across it, as he moved northward after the triumph of Dunbar; and, lastly, Bonnie Prince Charlie, bowing till his auburn locks mingled with his horse's mane to the fair ladies who gazed at him from the windows of the narrow street that guarded its approaches, led his Highlanders across the bridge to the easy victory of Prestonpans.

Leaving the bridge uncrossed behind us, we pursue our way down-stream along the shady lane of trees that leads to the town. To the left, beyond an ample margin of green grass, where the geese and ducks are grubbing for worms, and the little ragamuffins playing, the Esk flows leisurely in several channels down its broad bed against a background of trees and houses. To our right, on the other side of the road, runs the 'lead' which for centuries has turned the mill-wheels of Musselburgh—turned them for the monks of Dunfermline in the old time, but now for the 'honest toun.' A hundred yards or more and you come to the statue of Musselburgh's most distinguished citizen, Dr. Moir, the once famous 'Delta' of *Blackwood's Magazine*; and a little beyond the statue to Rennie's handsome bridge, bearing the modern road from Edinburgh.

If we should follow Prince Charlie's route, and, a few yards above the spot where the mill-lead rushes through its dirty grating, should take 'the Old Kirk Road' that strikes off to the right, we should come to the Parish Church at the top of Inveresk Hill. It is a noble site. At our feet the fertile plain of Midlothian, intersected by the windings of the wooded Esk, slopes up southwards into the long ridge of Carberry where Queen Mary surrendered to the Confederate Lords; the high, bleached pastures of the Pentlands rise to the south-westward; and nearer, and full to westward, Arthur Seat, like a couchant lion, his paws and flanks amid the smoke of Edinburgh. The grey waters of the Firth are but a mile to the north of us, and beyond them the Laws and Lomonds of Fife. One may even see the Grampians behind the latter in clear weather.

The hill itself is of no great height, and yet, from its commanding position, one of those 'high places' where from the dawn of religion men have worshipped God. Here the heathen Scots kindled the 'Beltane fires.' Here the Romans built a temple to one of their many deities. Here the monks took the stones of the Roman fortifications and built with them the first Christian church, which they named of St. Michael, the patron saint of hills. Which church, alas! was quite destroyed at the beginning of the last century in

the classic period, and the Roman and Christian stones and many others built into the huge barn which now stands here—the ‘Visible Kirk,’ as it is called, telling its own tale of the bleak religion of our Presbyterian fathers.

But we must not follow Prince Charlie’s road if Loretto is our mark. The straggling line of the High Street runs eastward before us, cut picturesquely on the left by the steeple of the Tolbooth. We pass beneath the steeple, and find the street has broadened greatly. We are in the old market-place, and may perceive at no great distance the ancient ‘Mercat Cross,’ with its pedestal and pillar and rampant lion, holding in its paws the shield which contains the scutcheon of the borough—three mussels, as many anchors, and the motto ‘Honesty,’ of which more anon. Behind us to leftward lies the Tolbooth, an agreeable, but, in point of architecture, a somewhat incongruous pile of building, of which the east front, the classic part, bears the date of 1762 above the doorway. At right angles with the Tolbooth, and continuing the line of the street on this side, we note the Musselburgh Arms, which is the principal inn of the town. A line of trees fringes the causeway on the opposite side of the street, and on that side the houses stand well back beyond a broad, gravelled footway. In one of the furthest of them, or rather in the house which it replaced, the great Regent Randolph breathed his last in the summer of the year 1332, in spite of the solicitude of the citizens, who nursed him night and day. They would take no reward for these tender ministrations from the Earl of Mar, who succeeded him. They had, said they, ‘but done their duty.’ ‘Sure ye be honest fellows,’ exclaimed the grateful Earl. Hence the motto, ‘Honesty,’ in the blazon of the town, above referred to.

There is a pleasant, restful air about this wide, quiet street, empty, for the most part, save for a cab or two beside the trees, a few ‘caddies’ loafing by the archway near the Musselburgh Arms, and now and then a group of Loretto boys strolling leisurely ‘up town.’

Of Loretto we find the first architectural trace in the Tolbooth, for it is built of the stones of ‘Laureit,’ which

the citizens, in a frenzy of reforming zeal, demolished in 1590, and put to this secular use—an act of sacrilege for which, it is said, they were for the next two centuries annually excommunicated by the Pope.

About a hundred yards beyond the Tolbooth the old town comes to an end at a point where the East Gate used to stand. The woods and policies of Pinkie House lie to the right; to the left Loretto garden-gate. The road runs on between them.

But we are not bound for Loretto yet: there is a good deal still to tell you of the town. About half-way between the Old Kirk Road, already mentioned, and the Tolbooth, we passed a narrow street, striking off leftwards. It leads straight to Mill Hill and the Iron Bridge, referred to in the first page of this work. The golfers' cabs go to the Links this way, and if we had followed them down Mill Hill, and passed the battered Sea-mill and dilapidated tanneries, in no long time we should see, above a cluster of red-roofed cottages, the plain, grey back of the Grand Stand, and beyond it the Race-course palings and the Links.

Of the Races Loretto boys seldom see much, but on a certain occasion a lucky illness confined one of them during the October meeting to the Sick-room, from the windows of which he witnessed some of the moving accidents that attend them. A 'welsher' was run down and cudgelled at his very feet. A carter, catching at one of the swinging boats, was flung high in air, like Sancho Panza from the muleteers' blanket. As he came to earth, the crowd rushed round him. The poor fellow had broken his neck. Such incidents were but the byplay of the fair. On the Links lay the scenes of main interest—the Grand Stand with its roaring mob, the led horses in the paddock, the bright coats of the jockeys flashing round the course, their whirling whips as they neared the winning-post.

The Races have done much to harm the town, and give it the touch of rascality which hangs about it in these days. But the Links which draw them are a pleasant place. A short, crisp turf beneath the feet; a brisk, salt air; the grey Firth and the blue hills of Fife; the curving sea-line

of Morrison's Haven, capped by red roofs and woods; the purple scarp of Arthur Seat—such are its gifts and graces.

The associations of the Links are not all of sport. In 1638 the Covenanters in their thousands gathered here to meet the Marquis of Hamilton when he came on his ill-fated errand to restore Episcopacy; here a dozen years later Cromwell held his camp for two months—opposite Linkfield gate they still show the place where he pitched his tent; and hither, a hundred years before, the bearers had brought some of the fourteen thousand dead who fell on the neighbouring field of Pinkie, and buried them in a hollow place, where their bones give greenness to the grass and bias to the putting at the first hole.*

For centuries the Links have been the scene of the shooting for the Silver Arrow, a serious task at first, and now a sport. But in this year of 1862 they share with St. Andrews, as their chief title to celebrity, the palm of golfing greens, and have gathered round them a goodly band of 'caddies'—sad rogues too many of them, it may be confessed, but cunning golfers, and gifted with a racy turn of humour which makes them excellent company.

Had we time to go further afield, I might lead you, in this imaginary excursion of ours, across the Iron Bridge to the suburb of Fisherrow, with its fishwives and nets and cobbles; or, in a contrary direction, conduct you through Newbigging, the tumble-down Irish quarter—unsavoury regions both of these, with no lack of fish heads in the gutters. We might gratify our industrial interest, and inspect the mines of Preston Grange, where, as early as the reign of Alexander II., the 'Monks of Newbottle' had their 'carbonarium.' Or again, consulting our taste for high life, and availing ourselves of the introductions which the travellers of fancy never lack, we might visit the fine eighteenth-century villas on Inveresk Hill; or pay our respects to Sir Archibald Hope at the historic House of Pinkie, and inquire of him if the 'Green Lady' still walks. But I have kept the reader too long from the chief object

* Such was our boyish belief, but I am not sure that it has historical warrant.

of our journey. It is time we cross the peaceful market-place, and enter by the garden-gate I mentioned.

The lands of Loretto lie in shape like a triangle of equal sides, whereof the base extends northwards from the point we stand at to Mill Hill,* and thus forms the eastern boundary of Musselburgh. The northern side of the triangle looks towards the Links; as we have seen, the southern side, or, to speak by the card, the south-eastern, skirts the road from Edinburgh, and faces the policies of Pinkie. The house itself lies towards the apex of the triangle, and reaches almost across the grounds from wall to wall. Beyond it, at the very apex, are the short avenues and the Lodge. Nine acres, then, of garden, orchard, park, and wilderness our Lady of Loretto thus encloses.

A hundred yards to north and left of us, with its own special wall between it and the orchard, stretches the garden proper. Here are the vineries, the currant bushes and gooseberry bushes, and the most of the vegetable beds, among which you may observe 'old Benjie,' our huge-nosed gardener, at work. A 'doo-cot' on the west wall speaks of the bygone time.

Wash-house and stables bound the garden northward, and beyond them, in the forgotten corner of the property, cutting a littered, scrubby farmyard-plot where the hens scrape, we find the old mill-lead of Musselburgh, which, as if ashamed of letting its dirty face be seen on a gentleman's premises, conceals itself as much as possible behind a screen of scrubby elder bushes.

The park and the orchard occupy the middle part of the domain—two acres or less the former, three acres or more the latter, separated one from the other by a high wall clothed with fruit-trees on the orchard side. The park has no special feature—more of a paddock than a park; nor need the gravel yard and covered playground at its further end detain us. But the orchard is prettily laid out. A few fruit-trees it has dotted about its pleasant spaces, great clumps of lilac and holly here and there, some handsome limes and chestnuts—in particular, on the Pinkie side, a fine row of English elms shading the 'Woody Walk,'

whence you may catch a glimpse of the orchard front of the house itself, white-harled, blue-slatted, of two stories, with a long balcony that seems to rest on the limbs of stout old pear-trees. To the right of the house and concealing its pillared portico, is a circular mound with a clump of trees atop. As a relic of our Lady's shrine it claims some further word.

When 'Thomas Doughtie wha haid bein lang capitane befor the Turk, as was allegit, brocht an image of our Lady' from Loretto in Italy, he received from the magistrates a piece of waste land 'besyid Mussilburgh,' whereon he 'foundit the Chappel of Laureit' in 1534. The place sprang into sudden fame by reason of a pilgrimage the King made thither three years after its foundation, and became a celebrated haunt of pilgrims of both sexes, who resorted to the shrine for company's sake, or for the pardons, indulgences, and sham cures dispensed by the worthy hermit and his brethren. It came at last to enjoy a very evil reputation, and in 1558, two years before the Reformation, was completely discredited by the public exposure of a bogus miracle which the friars had used as a move in the great game. In 1590, when the chapel, as we have mentioned, was demolished by the townsfolk, nothing was left save a vault of no great size, above and in front of which the mound was built of the *débris* of the ruined shrine. An antique stone above the doorway of the vault bears the device of a coronet, the date, 1647, and a confused monogram, which some read V. M. L., and interpret 'Virgini Mariae Lorettonensi.' If this be the true version, it seems probable that the owner of that day placed the stone here, wishing thereby to indicate to posterity that the vault was a genuine part of the 'Chappel of Laureit.' Others, of a secularising tendency, point triumphantly to the coronet, and maintain that the V is part of the flourish of the M, and that the two letters, M. L., to which we are thus reduced, stand for Maitland of Lauderdale, who was (or may have been) overlord of Loretto at the date inscribed. Be this as it may, it is on record that in 1831, when Dr. Langhorne had some digging

done to improve the shape of the mound, the workmen came upon some human skulls and a quantity of human bones, which the Doctor buried beneath the floor of the cell. And here, in the cell itself, a few years later was unearthed a gold chain—a 'tosary or badge of office,' says our authority. The relic was for long preserved in the drawing-room at Loretto, but was stolen at length by an unknown hand.

Such, then, were the grounds of Loretto in 1862 when Almond came there. A place of old and gentle residence, you would say, lovingly laid out a century before by one who had read his Verulam, or knew, at least, the gardener's secret—how to tame Nature without frightening her.

Such, I say, *were* the grounds of Loretto at the date of our imaginary journey, but such in this year of 1903, when I take pen in hand to write the story of Almond's life, they are no longer. The needs of the growing School and the architectural unscrupulousness of Almond have impressed a humorous touch upon the scene. 'Old Benjie's' potato-beds and gooseberry-plots have made way for a gravel playground, which has thrown down the north part of the garden-wall we mentioned in an effort to find room. Across the open space a fine new chapel looks disdainfully at the mouldering 'doo-cot.' But 'doo-cot' and chapel alike are scandalised at the clump of plain brick schoolrooms and laboratories which flout them from the garden end. And these in their turn have thrust out an arm beyond their boundaries, and sent the washerwomen packing. A row of old fives-courts of all shapes and sizes besets the mill-lead. A huge tower of no known style of architecture threatens the Lodge. A new fives-court has cut a 'monstrous cantle' from the covered playground. The park has its black, felt-roofed gymnasium and lumber-shed. The orchard has its goals and long trench for sliding. Only the mound and woody walk, and the long line of the leafy orchard wall remain the same. The leisurely look, the air of easy, moss-grown residence is gone from the domain. There has come in its place a nimble spirit

of change, which the old house, indeed, had years before confessed.*

A long and rambling house it is, which has been three centuries a-building, and has not yet seen an end. A house which has never been able to defend itself against the caprices of its restless lords, but has been added to and leaned up against, cut, carved, and altered to suit their changing needs. A house full of rooms which were constructed for one purpose and have been put to another—hay-lofts that now are class-rooms, class-rooms that once were stables. A house of contrasts and surprises. That broad stone staircase, with the worn steps, and the eight-day clock at the first landing, has an air of eighteenth-century gentility. You might fancy 'Mistress Jean,' in her high-waisted gown and silver-buckled shoes, tripping down it, and lilting 'Lewie Gordon' as she goes. But its companion at the far end of the passage is mean and wooden, and tells only of the feet of boys. In that little, low-windowed room in the orchard corner grave gentlemen in bag-wigs and knee-breeches have drunk strong ale and cried huzza! for Dettingen. But the big schoolroom across the stone passage knows nothing of politics or tankards, and has never rung save to the hortatory tones of the master, or the shouting of his coatless pupils. A house, too, of some special memories she cherishes. Clive has lived here, the terrible Indian Nabob, and gentle-souled Sir Ralph Abercromby, the hero of Aboukir. Here, too (so runs the legend), in the eighteenth century, some jolly landlord kept an inn. A house of many humorous retrospects. One tale, in particular, there is of Clive which makes her old sides shake with laughter as often as she thinks of it—the pleasant, high-roofed dining-room opening on the balcony I spoke of; the sumptuous Indian banquet; the provost and bailies of the 'honest toun' delighted, having dined; the dreaded viceroy smiling on them from the table end. But what are these fragrant sticks which the silent Bengalee has

* The house is still true to its character. Since this chapter was taken in hand the new governing body have made so many improvements that I no longer know my way about.

offered to the fashionable member of the council? Some oriental sweetmeat surely. He has taken one, that fashionable member, and is devouring it as best he can. His brethren have done the like. The viceroy sits as one entranced, staring at them in speechless amazement. Alas! reader, these dainties are 'segars.' The provost and his bailies are undone. O untoward ending of a great man's courtesy! O shameful flight of the town council from these enchanted halls! *

But Clive and his *khitmutgars* have vanished from Loretto. His rich Cashmere hangings, his splendid Benares plate, are but a faded picture of the past. She goes in *déshabillé* now, the roomy, rambling house, all sweetened by the fresh sea-breezes, and never stands upon a point of dignity, but clasps her brood of hardy boys to her motherly heart, and bids them make themselves at home.

Of two rooms only would I speak in greater detail. They open off the hall of entrance. One is the Headmaster's dining-room to the right—a dimly lighted chamber, with the low roof and small windows of Scottish houses of the seventeenth century. It looks out upon the trees of the avenue; you may see the Lodge behind them. The walls of the room are very thick, and the good fire keeps it warm and cosy. It is well but plainly furnished, and always very tidy—sofa and chairs of black haircloth. The little old lady lives mostly here. The room on the left is the 'Head's' study (for so you must now give me leave to call him) with the green-baize writing-table in the middle and the books all round. There is an old arm-chair and a high-backed, uncomfortable, chintz-covered sofa by the fire. The windows open on the orchard. These rooms have been put to other uses now, but when I enter the dining-room, I see the neat old lady rising to greet me with her gentle, kindly smile; and in the study the Head, sitting on his heel at the writing-table, and gazing thoughtfully into the orchard between the sentences of his letters.

* Dr. Moir, who is our authority for this legend, has made admirable use of it in the second chapter of *Mansie Waugh*.

CHAPTER V

LIFE AT LORETTO: THE 'PEWTER' PERIOD, 'JINKS,' THE
'CAPTAIN,' THE 'SKIPPER,' AND OTHERS

I HAVE endeavoured to give the reader some idea of the topographical surroundings of Almond's life at Loretto. I now propose to draw for him a picture of its human setting. Unless I can contrive to do this with some measure of felicity, I shall never succeed in giving him a notion of the man himself; for Almond's life, like all lives, was very strictly conditioned by its environment, and it is impossible to have a sight of him apart from it. If we would know the man, we must have some idea of the community which he administered. If we would understand the Schoolmaster, we must have some knowledge of his School.

Life at Loretto, then, will furnish the matter of the succeeding chapters, just as life at Rugby supplies the subject of *Tom Brown's School Days*. The 'Doctor' appears but little in 'Tom Brown,' and yet the book was Hughes's tribute to his Master. It depicts for us the human setting of his life. It gives that somewhat staid and distant figure a place upon the solid earth. What Tom Hughes in his illustrious work did for Arnold, I, in my own humble way, desire to do for Almond. How poor and lifeless Stanley's pages would seem to us, were not our minds full of vivid pictures from *Tom Brown*! In like manner the reader will understand the graver chapters of my own work the better if he sees them against their proper background.

To my schoolfellows of the younger set a word of explanation is due. The School has changed a good deal since I knew it best. My descriptions of Loretto life must seem, in some respects, archaic to Lorettonians of recent

years. But the period on which I chiefly dwell witnessed the establishment of all, or nearly all, the characteristic institutions of the place. Persons have passed; surroundings have been altered; but the essential spirit of the School remains what it then was made.

From the general reader, again, I must claim some liberal width of space in which to disport myself. When a man is dealing with memories of his school-days, he may be allowed a little tediousness. If now and then I seem to linger too long on a point, I would crave this special indulgence. So far as I know, however, there is nothing in the following pages which will not be found to add some touch of colour or precision to the picture which I am endeavouring to draw.

Almond left Merchiston in the spring of 1862 with much regret. 'It will be years,' he wrote to his mother when the purchase of Loretto had been completed, 'before I get such associations clustered round the place, and that is what I live for far more than comfort, or position, or money.' Of these last advantages, indeed, Loretto was far from giving much promise at the outset. Almond made, as he usually did, a bad bargain, was unfortunate in some of his early arrangements, and found himself at once in difficulties. 'I give him two years to ruin himself and the School,' said one who did not love him on hearing of the new venture. 'Yes,' said Almond when the saying was quoted to him in later days. 'He gave me two years, but one was nearly enough for it.'

The neat old lady came to her son's assistance. She had no belief in his worldly wisdom, but was persuaded by the voice of maternal affection, and by Mr. Tristram's* unshaken confidence that his cousin would succeed in anything he attempted. It must be confessed her faith was sorely tried. Success was very long delayed. During the decade of doubtful years which followed the removal to Loretto she suffered cruelly from money anxieties, which the buoyant disposition of her son, and his keen interest in other things, enabled him lightly to shake off.

Of the nineteen boys who were at Loretto during the

* Now Canon Tristram of Durham,

Easter Term of 1862, only twelve joined Almond when he commenced his headmastership in May. There were two new enrolments, so that it was with a school of fourteen boys that the actual beginning was made. In addition to these there were, for the first two or three years, a few private pupils, 'Pewters,' as for some occult reason they were called, gifted, most of them, with keen brains and an ardent love of sport. Of these was Andrew Lang, since sufficiently well known; William Scott Forman, distinguished in later years in the Civil Service of India; and Donald Mackenzie, already mentioned, so prominent in the sequel in all that concerned the welfare of the School. The 'pewters' read at first with Mr. Patch of Exeter, but afterwards mostly with Mr. Beilby, the senior classical master, who was as good a scholar as cricketer. The field at Pinkie was rented immediately. From the first, with the aid of masters, 'pewters,' and professional, Loretto was able to put a fair Eleven in the field.

Of Almond and this early Loretto life, Mr. Lang sends me the following pleasant reminiscences:—

'My memories of the regretted Dr. Almond ("the H.M." we called him) go a long way back, and our acquaintance may be said to have "begun with a slight aversion." Merchiston was playing the Academy, on a dank wicket, and I, being then about fourteen, and as tactless as ever, was looking on, with a pal. Some fellows were lying on the wet grass in front of us, the backs of their heads towards us. Quite *à propos des bottes*, I said to my friend, "Did you hear that Almond bowled eleven wides in an over lately?" that being the solitary fact, or fable, about Almond which was in my knowledge. "Shut up, you fool!" said my friend, and a man in the group in front of us turned round, a man with a dark complexion, bushy dark hair, and an expression of displeasure and surprise. "That's Almond," said my friend, and we went elsewhere.

'I do not know if there was any truth in the story of the wides; I never, in later years, recalled our first meeting to the H.M., nor do I suppose that in the undergraduate of 1864 or so, he recognised the tactless schoolboy of 1858.

About that time he was a master at Merchiston, and beheld the dawn of THE JOINTER,* then the swiftest bowler for a small boy who ever lived. Later I met Mr. Barclay, grown up, and a living terror to batsmen. "Lolly" Tennent and his brother Hector were also great lights in the world at Merchiston. Hector went on to Loretto in the Head's first years, as a "pewter." He was not a great scholar; in his *Horace*, opposite the words *Fusce, pharetra*, he had pencilled "*To wash while doing so*"—while doing what? And how did he get it out of the Latin?

'The Head played football for Merchiston, at least against "Academicals." Our captain at the Academy ("the Henderson Row Academy?" as a cabman put it to me, when I asked him to drive me to the "Academy") was the very image of Guy Livingstone at Rugby. He was tall, strong, slim, dark, and sardonic. Well, our captain taught us a trick, got, I think, from a medical student, whereby we might, and must, "kill Almond," when collaring him. I adored that boy, on this side idolatry, but I never had a chance to carry out his instructions. I was not in the Fifteen, though my dear cousin and friend, "Tommy" Mein, a beautiful and gigantic youth, being captain later, gave me a place, out of an affection utterly reckless of consequences. But *I* had a conscience, and, with a heavy heart, found a better man.

'I left the Academy for St. Leonard's Hall, St. Andrews, and the Head brought over a Loretto cricket team, *plus* the redoubted Hector Tennent, the actual Hector of his Ilios. We played on the beautiful ground, "our old monastic pitch," where Mr. Knox used to walk about with little James Melville, and tell him to be a staunch, true-blue Presbyterian. The Girls' School plays there now, and their best field is a daughter of the Head's. Hector hit a ball to leg which travelled in a north-easterly line, and was stopped, and never recovered, in the pond. We played a return match at Loretto, and, on reaching the ground, observed that a cab was standing outside on the road. Why? Loretto won the toss, and put in Hector and another.

* The Rev. James Barclay, minister of St. Paul's Church, Montreal.

Hector was too many for me, he knocked up a lot of runs, and when he got out, took that cab, and drove to Dalkeith, where he was engaged to play. Was that a policy on which a man could look back with pleasure in the deepening shade of life's twilight? Can you call it cricket?

'In the summer before I went up to Balliol, I had nothing to do, and was nearly dead after a winter at Glasgow University. The Head very kindly allowed me to come to Loretto for the summer term, to read Greek with Mr. Beilby, fresh from Cambridge. My friends, Donald Mackenzie and "Bilshky" Forman, the best of men, were also there, the actual School consisting of but twenty-five or thirty boys, small, but nice and teachable. We seniors were called "pewters" for some mystic reason, which, as Herodotus says, "it were unholy for me to divulge in this place." We played a good deal of cricket. The Head was the keenest of sportsmen, but he had taken up the game after leaving Oxford, and was nourished on the somewhat *rococo* principles of *The Cricket Field*, by the Rev. Mr. Pycroft. Thus he extended himself in forward play like a picture of a man in that attitude by the late Mr. Watts, R.A., which attitude was apt to result in a return to bowler. He bowled both fast round and slow under, and I remember a very fine innings of his for about seventy, against the Academy. But he chiefly shone, in my time, as a captain, putting his own energy as far as might be into his adventurous team of small boys.

'I never had any opportunity of observing him as a teacher, and the materials, in these early days, were limited. To make the boys manly, truthful, and, in all senses, clean, was his endeavour. The world knows how well he succeeded. He was at that time much interested in Darwin's famous book, then recent, *The Origin of Species*. But the careless minds of the "pewters" were entirely indifferent to this high theme, and, I fear, I never did read Mr. Darwin's explanation of how species originated. Life must have been very monotonous before species brought it off.

'In the Long, the Head, with a little boy called Campbell, and I went on a fishing tour. First we went to a cottage

in Laggan, where I mainly lived on cherry gum and oat-cake. The gum was excellent, much better than the sodden flesh of an unknown animal species which was placed before us. *The Origin of Species* threw no light on this comestible, which was darkly conjectured to be "kid"—a word of double sense. Children were about, but we saw no goats. The fishing was hopelessly bad, and we went to Inchnadampf (I am no Celtic scholar, and leave the spelling to the learned), in Assynt. There were 300 lochs in the parish, all good then, but I was so ill from overwork at Glasgow that I scarcely fished, and was, in my opinion, most disagreeable company. How the Head put up with me where opportunities for drowning a languid, discontented person were so numerous and eligible, I cannot conceive, and mention the circumstance with remorse, as a proof of the long-suffering kindness and tolerance of the Head.'

These were the days of casual arrangements in schools. In the life of the community itself things went more leisurely than now. Pressure was less; responsibility less imperative. A multitude of influences, political, moral, and commercial, have combined to straiten our days. Burdens have grown more heavy. The Titan is perceptibly wearier.

But of weariness for many a long year Almond knew nothing. He was joyous and innocent as a child. His brain was at work upon a thousand problems. His life moved in an atmosphere of happy Bohemianism, abhorring prigs, and dons, and worldlings. 'I wonder, if I had been a college don,' he writes at a later date, 'if I should have been a believer in Greek particles, and *exegesis*, and white chokers, and gowns, and long black coats, and all things musty.' He never was a believer in any of these things. He taught a good deal in his brilliant, careless fashion; discussed all things in heaven and earth; played football and golf and cricket with the eager zest of a boy. Worries of all kinds, as has been said, he shook off without difficulty. 'I often look back,' he writes to Canon Tristram in 1900, 'to the happy, easy days, when I was nearly bankrupt'—the days, in fact, which I am endeavouring to describe.

In 1866, when the present writer became a Loretto boy,

the 'pewters' had departed to London, or Oxford, or India, and the place had become a school. There were seventeen new enrolments that October, I believe, and the numbers had risen to nearly sixty. A vigorous and wholesome set of boys they were, Scottish with very few exceptions, and in social position fairly representative of the professional, landed, and upper commercial classes of the country. On the intellectual side, it must be confessed, they were, for the most part, very ill prepared. Preparatory schools, as we now know them, did not then exist in Scotland, and the greater day-schools, with their classes a hundred strong, and their utter lack of organisation, while affording an excellent training to the clever and industrious few, could do little for the rank and file but flog them soundly. A man of scholarly ambitions would have been discouraged by the backwardness of most of his pupils; but Almond's interest in education was other than scholarly. He had in his mind an ideal of manhood—courageous, temperate, honest, with head to grasp and heart to serve the public need, free, above all things, from the cant of convention. Loretto was to him a training-place for these virtues, and, with scarcely a thought of the huge odds against him, he set himself to build up such a school, and to produce such a type of character among his pupils.

Most of the sixty boys above mentioned were of what would now be considered preparatory school age. Very few were over sixteen. Some of the older ones exercised a kind of authority under the title of 'seniors,' and from the first there were heads of bedrooms. But the principle of schoolboy government, as since understood at Loretto, was scarcely recognised, and the place was managed, out of doors as well as indoors, by Mr. Almond, as we still called him, and the staff.

Of the staff the most important member, and the only English university man, was Mr. Burrow, whose accurate scholarship and interesting teaching I would celebrate at greater length were he not still in full vigour of life. He shared with Almond the higher classical work of the School. But at this early period most of us knew him best out of

hours, where, at football or shinty, or on 'grinds' and Sunday walks, he cultivated the happiest relations with the boys.

A very different kind of man was Mr. Jenkins, in common parlance 'Jinks,' who taught us younger ones writing and spelling and English work generally. 'Jinks' was a man of rather humble origin, and showed by his somewhat stooping figure, flat chest, and delicate, student look, the hard work it had cost him to gain his education. Yet he was active in his physical habits, and at football, in particular, was conspicuous whenever there was any opportunity for footwork. Indeed he was the finest dribbler imaginable, being quite capable of steering the rounder ball of those days through a crowded field, and kicking a 'speculative' goal to end up with.

'Jinks' was a candidate for the ministry of the United Presbyterian Church, and was understood to read, in that view, vast quantities of Hebrew and divinity when we were all a-bed. He was a good and careful teacher, with a touch of literature about him, which came out even in the scraps he gave out as dictation lessons.

Go call a coach ! And let a coach be called !
 And let the man that calls it be the caller !
 And in his calling let him nothing call
 But coach ! coach ! coach ! O for a coach, ye gods !

—this was one of them, from *Chrononhotonthologos*. Another—

Her feet beneath her petticoat,
 Like little mice, stole in and out,
 As if they feared the light—

might seem to show that he was not altogether indifferent to female attractions ; but we never thought of such things in those days. 'Jinks' hardly ever used the cane, but had a skilful way of admonishing us with slaps on the face, 'skytes,' as we called them. 'Do you see that blot?' he would inquire, and as the stress of his voice mounted to the word 'blot,' he had the offender on the left cheek. It was seldom of much use to try to fend off Jinks's 'skytes.' He was far too quick for that. But one day 'Lolly' Brown,

who had been sharpening a pencil, managed to get his hand up in time. The point of the knife encountered 'Jinks's' open palm, and, running almost from end to end of the thumb muscle, inflicted a deep and painful wound. It was weeks before the thing healed up, and one night poor 'Jinks' was so spent with the pain and fever of it that, in spite of his best resolution, he could scarcely keep his chair. We went and told another member of the staff, who came and took the class, and prevailed on our suffering master to go to bed.

The reader would do wrong to be too hard on the irregular method of punishment which was responsible for this mishap. It was the way of teachers then. Not even all the religious dignity and stern self-discipline of English Puritanism could prevent the great Dr. Arnold, on a certain occasion mentioned in the history of 'Tom Brown,' from knocking over a pupil who had made a false concord. Even now it may be doubted if there is a single living school-master of thirty who has never boxed a boy's ears. At all events, we were no censorious critics. We had a real liking and respect for our master, and were well aware that he was a very religious man. Not that he ever mentioned religion to us, except, indeed, upon one occasion. But on that occasion his reference to the subject was so striking that one at least of his audience has never forgotten it. A member of the class had told a lie, and, for the only time during my knowledge of his rule, Almond had punished him with what seemed to us undue harshness. We crowded round 'Jinks,' and asked him if the punishment had not been too severe. 'No !' he replied. 'Not too severe ! What punishment for so vile a fault as lying could be too severe for man to inflict, when God takes vengeance upon sinners for untold ages in the Lake of Fire ?' Out it came, the whole crude Calvinist doctrine, more horrible than a maniac's dream, and delivered with an appalled earnestness, a depth of shuddering conviction, which struck us thoughtless boys dumb. He never referred to the topic again.

The Modern Language master was Mr. Goldschmidt, 'Goldie,' as we called him. He was a sallow little man, of

Prussian birth and Hebrew origin, whose heavy eyebrows, gathered up into a point in the middle of the forehead so as almost to form a right angle, gave his face a strange expression, half humorous, half melancholy. A most humorous fellow he was, who had the gift of tongues and many other talents besides. We feared we were to lose him on the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war in 1870, and turned out to cheer him as he set off down the 'Woody Walk,' bound for Berlin in answer to the military summons. Some defect of heart or eyesight sent him back to us in a week or two; but we did actually lose him a year later to Fettes College, where he was appointed to the charge of the Modern Language teaching.

There were various visiting masters who came down from Edinburgh to instruct us, among whom Mr. Napier, the skilful and courteous Drawing master, had begun under the Langhorne's his forty years' connection with the School. It was he who drew the cartoon, 'These or those?' which Almond had exhibited in the booksellers' windows in Princes Street, when, as you will afterwards hear, Dr. Harvey's action threatened to put a stop to the Interscholastic Games. The cartoon represented, on one side, a number of boys of noble aspect, performing manly exercises, such as pole-jumping and hurdle-racing; and, on the other, a set of miserable, knock-kneed, spectacled youths, slouching along streets with their hands in their pockets, or drinking spirits at luncheon-counters. The spectator was invited to choose which of the two kinds of youngsters he preferred. Almond had great hopes of attracting the notice of Edinburgh society by these cartoons to the burning nature of the question which the abolition of the Games appeared to him to raise. But the Edinburgh public of those days had much more important matters to interest it than the physical condition of its youth. The cartoons were published a full generation too soon.

Mr. Robertson, old 'Robie' in our vocabulary (but he could hardly have been more than forty years of age then), was another of the visiting masters. He taught Arithmetic. 'Do it if ye can, and do it if ye can't!' was a

phrase of his to boys who came desiring help. We welcomed 'Robie's' lessons, however, as delivering us from Almond's own instructions in that subject, which were our special dread. At the age of four or so his father had begun him with problems, such as ' $7\frac{1}{2}$ articles at $5\frac{1}{4}$ d. apiece cost?'—which he answered, so to speak, on the nail; and by dint of this and other practice, his arithmetical faculties, originally nimble, had attained such an extraordinary degree of acuteness that questions as to the papering of rooms, the dimensions of cisterns, the leakage of beer barrels, and all the other conundrums with which skilful arithmeticians perplex the brains of their young charges presented to him no sort of difficulty. He would rapidly cover a board with the working of such examples, missing out invariably several important steps, expounding loudly all the time, and turning every now and then half round with a sharp cry of 'Do you understand?' When we had replied several times that we did not, he got into such a fume that the position was difficult. For those who have not the 'low cunning' which the late Professor Blackie declared to be necessary for the study, mathematics are always a mystery. But Mr. Robertson gave us plenty of time.

Of all our masters the 'Captain' was the most picturesque. The fearlessness of his temper, and a slow, masterful, swaggering walk he had, gained him his soldierly title. But there was otherwise nothing military about him, and his real name was Vilant Graham. His mother had been French, which accounted for his speaking English with a slightly Gallic accent, and for the foreign character of his Christian name. But no one ever called him anything else but 'Captain.' When he went shooting with my brothers, even the gamekeeper would say: 'The "Captain" 'll keep to the east side o' the fir strup,' or 'The "Captain" 'll bide whaur he is till we come till him.' The 'Captain' was a strongly built man of the middle height, with thick, black hair which grew low down upon his forehead, and which, from some trace of early vanity, he parted in the middle, and a splendid, big black beard which had never known the razor. The face as a whole was well formed, and owned

a pair of beautiful brown eyes which flashed strange fire when he was angry, but grew tender as a girl's at some tale of pity, nay, could even fill with tears under the influence of a generous emotion. He was a St. Andrews man, or, at least, had received his college if not his school training at St. Andrews, and had borne away from that home of golf and learning some rudimentary acquaintance with the two classic tongues and a passion for the ancient game. But he was a hopeless duffer at it, although he had a capital style, and always seemed about to succeed. It was the same with every form of land sport. Some defect of eye or impediment of limb prevented his shining. But put him into water, and he was at once a great athlete, and could skim through the North Sea waves, or defy the North Sea cold with the speed and vigour of a seal. At Loretto, in those bitter June bathes before breakfast when most of us boys rushed in and out, the 'Captain' braced himself with a long swim. He always began with a duck-dive in shallow water, whence he emerged far out at sea, and racing along as if he went by steam. When the rest of us were mostly dressed, and engaged in the disagreeable task of getting the sand out of our toes, he would emerge from what I half believe was his native element, red as a lobster and glowing with satisfaction.

This robustness of circulation was the physical expression of a corresponding ardour of temperament. He was very passionate, and the slaps he sometimes dealt us under the impulse of sudden fury were not so much 'skytes' as 'drives.' But we never long resented anything of that sort from the 'Captain.' The man had the heart of a child with no touch of the occasional cruelty of the child. I can remember on one occasion his giving me one of those tremendous cuffs on the side of the head, and my going softly for several days in consequence, in considerable bitterness of soul. But when he came up to me one morning play-hour in the orchard, and spoke some gentle words of apology, with such a look in those brown eyes of his, I forgave him in a moment, and felt that the 'Captain' was the very finest man in all the world.

The 'Captain' introduced us small boys to *Henry's First Latin Book*. It was under his guidance that we first became acquainted with the architectural feats of Balbus, and the military despondency of Caius. Both in Latin and Greek he was a splendid drill-master, and his teaching of the verb *τύπτω*, accompanied by illustrations of the present tense, given by means of a twopenny cane which he dusted our jackets with occasionally, was a masterwork of thoroughness and energy. In Latin he even compiled a syntax of his own, which I once knew by heart but have forgotten. When the strain had grown too great, and we were thoroughly sick of these repulsive studies, he would stop, and repeat, with a humorous air, what I believe is the motto of *Henry's First Latin Book*: 'He shall be brought through the weary bitterness of his learning.' But when we had cleared the barbed-wire entanglements of this early period, and done our duty by the *Commentaries* of Cæsar (which we shall always detest, however Cicero and certain of the moderns may praise them), he gave us a glimpse of true poetry in the *Æneid* of Virgil. The work was almost as great a novelty to him as to us, and this fact lent an interest to his teaching which can hardly be attained by a master who knows all about his subject. When we reached the Fourth Book, and found that Æneas was actually about to abandon Dido, he quite agreed with us that the hero was 'no gentleman.' But a day or two after, as if fearing that we might, with his concurrence, do wrong to the memory of so great a shade, he delivered us a lecture upon the other side of the question, which, however, as it was clearly half-hearted and perfunctory, did not in the least affect our opinion.

The 'Captain' was always accompanied by his dog, Brutus, a fine, curly-haired, black retriever. Like his master, Brutus was hot-tempered and affectionate. The 'Captain' loved him with all his heart, both for his own sake and for a special reason, as you will hear.

Before leaving the subject of the staff at Loretto in 1866 and the following years, some mention should be made of the Weavers, who, as steward and matron, discharged

important functions. Mrs. Weaver's Christian name was Marion. Her surname is believed to have been Mackay. If one might judge from her dark hair and light blue eyes, she was of West Highland origin, and she spoke English with the pleasant, drawling intonation so often found in Argyllshire. She entered the Almonds' service in Glasgow in 1840 as Mrs. Almond's maid and Hely's nurse. The boy was then eight years of age, and Marion herself about twenty, and a good-looking girl enough but for traces of early smallpox. When Hely's father accepted the living of Costock in Nottinghamshire, she followed the family thither. On holiday at Grantham she fell in with a big, straight-backed, hard-featured Yorkshireman, a clever, merry, wilful scapegrace of a fellow, who paid court to her in good set terms. When she returned to Costock, the love-letters came pouring in—wonderful letters, full of historical allusions, and quotations from Byron and Shelley. Poor Marion was won completely, promised to marry the man, and actually did marry him in 1853 or thereabouts, in spite of all the Almonds could say.

John Weaver, for that was the lover's name, was about thirty-eight years old when he began courting Marion, and had lived a kind of roving life which is much commoner in the United States of America than in the older countries. He had been taken from school, presumably as incorrigible, at ten years of age, and apprenticed successively to a baker, a clockmaker, and a tailor. But no indentures could bind the lad. He ran away from one master after another. At the time of the marriage he had enlisted in the army, and was much employed in transposing and copying music for the regimental band. He could himself play no less than seven instruments, but was a finished master of the flute, and, in the years I am writing of at Loretto, taught Bill White and 'Jones' Robertson on that instrument, both of whom were good performers, the latter even wonderfully so for a boy. All seemed likely to go well with the newly married couple, when the restless devil who had driven Weaver all his life from post to pillar, persuaded him to desert the army, and vanish from the public view. In her

destitution Mrs. Weaver turned to her old friends, the Almonds, who, like good Christian people, took her again into their service, on the condition, however, that if John Weaver should reappear, she should not go back to him. He did appear again, in due season, and, giving himself up to the authorities, served out his time. This act of penitence must have done something to restore relations with the Almonds, as it would seem to be at this time that he formed that profound attachment to the Head which was the saving of him in the sequel. His military term expired, he joined the navy. But hearing about the year 1860 that Almond was second master at Merchiston, he once more abandoned Her Majesty's service, presented himself at Merchiston, and, imposing upon his patron with some story of a cock and bull, was engaged as boot-black at the Castle. When Almond migrated to Loretto in 1862, Mrs. Weaver became matron, and John was at last permitted to rejoin her, as steward and factotum.

His labours in these capacities were unusually various. He baked the School bread (which was so excellent that a dyspeptic parent had a special supply sent to Edinburgh); chose the meat; selected the coals; mended the clocks and furniture, and supervised the fabric of the house; looked after the accounts and contracts; rang the bells; and sounded the reveille. In fact, he was School marshal and porter, manciple and clerk in one, and showed in each of these various capacities the cleverness and power of application which formed one part of his strangely mingled nature. He was, indeed, the most versatile of men, and with other antecedents and better opportunities might have made fame. In addition to his instrumental accomplishments already mentioned, he busied himself with composing music, and in one of those years published the air to the 'Muckle Slippy Stane,' a well-known song, which Bill White used to sing with much acceptance. He was always reading the early nineteenth-century poets, Shelley and Byron and the rest. Like the second of these great men, he was a noted pugilist, and was believed by us small boys to be the only man about the place who could, if need were, tackle Crawford, the big

Musselburgh 'caddie,' whom every Loretto boy knows. His life-preserver, which he used to bring out occasionally, was held to have some mystic power. He could stretch a man stark with it whenever he liked. Even in little things he had ways of his own. 'Clear-r-r out of the gangway there, you little boys!' he would cry in resonant Yorkshire, as he moved about the passages, his little, woolly-haired Skye terrier, 'Jeff' (short for Jefferson Davis, for Loretto was all for the South), trotting at his heels. 'No gettin' round the ship for you!' He had a rather terrifying way, when he met small boys, of swinging up his arm suddenly, as if to box their ears, and then passing it harmlessly over their heads. It was a good joke when one knew it. He roused us in the morning with a curious naval rigmarole, some deep-sea chanty of the call, which even at that horrid hour usually drew from us a cheerful answer. It was from these and other sea ways that he derived his nickname of the 'Skipper.' On Sunday mornings during that delightful quarter of an hour which succeeded the late call, when we lay still and enjoyed the full luxury of rest, he would seat himself at the harmonium in the hall, and play a certain grand chorale, which I have never heard since, but can sing at any time, if the reader has a liking for chorales.

Once, and only once, in holiday time, I had the luck to hear him talk freely of old days, and then one could see what a sample-book of human documents and local colour the man's mind was. He was certainly a most interesting sea-dog and Jack-of-all-trades, and would have made the fortune of any one who could have coined him into stories. But, in general, his temper was rather short and bearish, and he unbent little with us youngsters. 'Them there boys,' he once said, when the School property had suffered some exceptional dilapidation, 'are made for no other thing than to do mischief.' Nor had he much opinion of masters. There was not one of them but had known the rough edge of his tongue when the moody fit was on him. For, indeed, during these years, and for many years afterwards, the man had a hard battle to fight. In the course of his roving life he had contracted a confirmed habit of drunkenness, and

although he had done much to reclaim himself, even at the period of which I write any sudden quarrel or unusual vexation might disturb the wavering balance, and send him flying off on a wild and furious bout. On these occasions he always vanished from the School, and buried himself, no one knew where. His return, which took place in broad daylight, and was seldom delayed beyond the third or fourth day, was a fine and imaginative thing. He hired at some livery stable in Edinburgh an open brougham with four horses and two postilions, and in this triumphal equipage drove down the populous sea-road to Loretto, where he arrived at the pillared entrance in a state of glorious intoxication, and was received with patience by Almond, who, no doubt, paid the postilions; with reproaches by Mrs. Weaver, who presently packed him off to bed; and by Jeff with uncritical delight. Of one of the last of these bouts, which must have taken place about 1873, the exciting cause was a quarrel with some master, the 'Captain' or another. The 'young Doctor,'* of whom more anon, happened to be in the house at the time, and sat ready to prescribe in the little matron's room, while the 'Skipper' raved about the wrongs the master had inflicted on him. 'You would like to have a crack at him, Weaver, wouldn't you?' inquired the Doctor, who was quick to seize the humour of a situation. 'Ah-h-h! That I would!' shouted the old boxer, reeling back into his Jem Mace pose. 'If I could only just give him one atween the eyes!' After a few days in hiding, Weaver emerged again on these occasions, and went about his duties the same ingenious, serviceable man as before, but a trifle more silent and morose; suffering, moreover, as the years went on, from a touch of chronic lumbago, which gave him the look of a man carrying a burden, as indeed he did.

It was represented to Almond on many hands that these passionate Hegiras and romantic home-comings of the 'Skipper,' which took place several times during my school-days, were likely to have a bad moral influence upon the

* The late Dr. Sanderson of Musselburgh, so called to distinguish him from his father, the 'old Doctor,' who also attended at the School.

boys, and, in particular, could not but prejudice the chances of a struggling School. Almond replied that Weaver was a brave man struggling with an evil habit; that the fits were becoming less and less frequent; that no right-minded boy would be injured by his action in retaining him, or sensible parent misunderstand it—in a word, he refused to give him up. This wise folly was rewarded in due season. Gradually the 'Skipper' got the better of his infirmity. For the last twenty years of his life there were no breakdowns.

Mrs. Weaver had, when I knew her, quite lost the charms which had captivated her wayward lord. She had, indeed, grown very fat, and, in after years, even rivalled Almond's St. Bernard, Countess, whose heavy meals and unclipped dew-claws disposed her to an abnormal development. 'Phew!' Mrs. Weaver was heard to say one hot summer afternoon, as she mounted the stone stairs and found the big dog panting on the landing, 'Phew! It must be an aw-awful thing for the poor dog to be so fa-at!' Mrs. Weaver was an admirable specimen of the race of old Scottish family servant, now unhappily extinct. She was transparently honest and devoted to the Almonds' interest, and especially adored Hely, whom I believe she never regarded save as her own boy, the merry, thoughtful Hely of early Glasgow days. She had plenty of common-sense as well as a will and temper of her own, and always uttered her opinion freely on anything that came within her sphere—a habit suiting well with the ways of Loretto, which, as we shall see, was in all respects a Palace of Truth. Though she never had any children of her own, she had a very motherly heart, as I learnt, I think, in my very first term one cold midnight when I took 'the croup.' Finding myself on the point of choking, I kicked up the boy next me, and whispered him to go for the matron. Having some experience of cross-grained nurses, I felt rather frightened as I heard the old boards creak to her approaching tread. But there was no reason for alarm. Her first words reassured me. She was all tenderness and *ipecacuanha*.

Of course, like all school matrons, she had her unreason-

able side. If we left our waistcoats (for we still wore waistcoats) out in the park, where the rain or the old white pony made a mess of them ; or, in our efforts to get warm all round, burnt holes in the hinder part of our knickerbockers ; or lost our handkerchiefs, so that of a lot marked 'D. MacIntyre, 12,' at the beginning of the term only seven could be found at the end of it, her annoyance was unaccountably great. But, in general, she was a very fine old girl, and did much to promote that kindliness of temper which, as I shall elsewhere remark at greater length, was from the first exceptionally characteristic of Loretto.

Older persons considered that her weak point lay in too great kindness to malingerers. 'What are these boys staying in for this afternoon?' Almond would cry, bursting suddenly into the cosy, little room by the bell-door. 'Oh, Mr. Almond, the poor boys have colds.' 'Colds, the little humbugs? Let me have a look at them !' And in a very few minutes, unless good cause were shown, these boys were trotting briskly along the road to Falside, which was, no doubt, the best thing for them.

CHAPTER VI

LIFE AT LORETTO—*continued*: SPORTS AND PASTIMES

IT must be confessed that until the School began to beat other schools at games, we small boys—and in the years of which I write the majority of Loretto boys were small—had no great patriotism, and no very high opinion of the Head and his ways. Of course he was very amusing—an ‘awful joke,’ as we put it—and amazingly clever, knowing all about everything from birds’ eggs and salmon-flies to moths and stars; but then he never would leave us alone. Either we were loafing in a morning play-hour, and must trot twice round the garden to warm ourselves; or we had been croaking about our prospects for next Saturday’s match with the Academy, and he could not endure croakers any more than Mrs. Quickly could ‘a-bear swaggerers’; or again, we had stood like a flock of sheep along the touch-line at Raeburn Place, too tame and spiritless to raise a cheer for Malcolm Thomson, as he made his heroic efforts to save that same hopeless match. For in those days, you must know, all matches with the Academy were hopeless matches. There were giants at the Academy in those days, reader, irresistible men, the like of whom has never since been seen, and we revered them as a kind of demigods. One of them has since wielded more than regal power in India, and sits now in mysterious majesty in London, with his finger on the pulse of that Empire. But if you should fancy that these high dignities constitute his chief title to fame, he knows as well as we do that, when he turned his back on Raeburn Place, his period of true greatness lay behind him.

For several years we used to face the Academy with five given men, and at times made something of a fight. It

was the Homeric age of football. The individual runner or dribbler was everything. Nobody every 'chucked' till he was held. Matches lasted commonly about two hours, and as forwards made little effort to keep near the ball, and backs seldom combined, good runners took their men in detail. Such runs as those Academy boys made you never saw. On our side, too, there was a 'pewter' who could pass a dozen men. Hacking and tripping were allowed in the earliest encounters, and it was a lovely thing to see the runner whose back leg had been dexterously tipped inwards from behind, roll headlong over like a shot hare. At cricket the Head used to tell us of a match in which the 'pewters' and their allies had beaten the Academy. But we never believed him. No Loretto combination had ever defeated them, or ever would. They used to come down and breakfast with our team at nine, and, if you will admit a sporting phrase, 'take tea with them' afterwards till sundown. There was no dislodging them from the wicket once they got there, or staying there for any length of time ourselves.

For all this we took an ample revenge in after years. For a number of seasons succeeding 1880 the matches, both at cricket and football, were mostly hollow wins for Loretto. But at this period the first event that shook our belief in the matchless powers of the Academy boys was the institution of the Interscholastic Games. This athletic gathering of the leading Scotch secondary schools of the day—the Edinburgh High School, the Edinburgh Academy, Merchiston, Loretto, and, in later years, Glenalmond—was held for the first time in the year 1866. The sports took place in the beginning of the month of April upon the Academy field at Raeburn Place, and, while they lasted, were, for all the schools concerned, the principal athletic happening of the year. For a small and young School such as Loretto then was they supplied a most valuable stimulus, particularly for the Spring Term, which, as all good boarding-school masters know, is the deadest, and, in moral ways, the most dangerous of the year. Although in the earlier meetings the Academy usually won most of the open events,

in the under-age and under-height competitions we held our own from the first. What huge interest these trials excited in us! With what beating hearts did we await the issue! Our attention to Mr. Smith's Lenten Sermons at St. Peter's was painfully disturbed by anticipations of the fateful day, and a Loretto boy who has since led an eager life declares that when in a certain year he won the pole-jump open to boys under five feet in height, he felt quite old and *blasé*, and was surprised to find, as he did a few days afterwards, that life had still something left to offer.

The rehearsals for these Olympics were organised by Mr. Graham, and went by the name of 'The Captain's Games.' Of the jumps we liked the pole-jump best, and practised endlessly at this delightful pastime. Quarter miles on the square, hilly course at Pinkie Mains we found rather heavy going. But hundred yards races were capital fun, as indeed were hurdles, unless the 'Captain,' in a Spartan fit, had the bars put on the near side of the posts, in which case they hurt the shin exceedingly, if one came against them. The 'Captain's' cheery, vigorous management of these Games was a fine piece of work. He devised a series of handicaps in the various contests which kept the interest going all the while, and constructed ingenious tables at the end of the term, showing the exact position of each boy in every competition. What endless trouble assistant masters give themselves in small, uncelebrated schools, often for no pelf and very little praise, to work up some small portion of the vineyard! And middle age overtakes them at such humble tasks, and promotion lingers, and their heads are growing grey. A sad world sometimes to the observant eye this little kingdom of a school—a melancholy world!

In consequence of the 'Captain's' careful training we soon began to win our fair share even of the open events, and as the ages and numbers of our boys increased, and Fettes College held aloof, might have ended in sweeping the board, had not Dr. Harvey, then Rector of the Academy, withdrawn his boys from the Interscholastic Union after the meeting of 1874, and refused to sanction the use of the Academy field for the purposes of the Games. Of the re-

verses which Almond experienced during his life few caused him such acute annoyance as this decision. The Games had won his keenest advocacy. With the exception of the annual football match with England they had become the most popular athletic outing of the year in Edinburgh. In his imaginative and ambitious programme they formed a part of his lifelong battle for the promotion of the manly virtues and the confusion of nincompoops and pedants. The Rector's plea that the interest which they excited was injuring the intellectual work of his boys was far from sufficing him. From school lessons, as then understood, no benefit comparable in importance to the gift of the Games was, in his opinion, likely to emerge. With the aid of his former pupil, Dr. Charles Cathcart, he contrived that the Games should take place at Corstorphine, upon the field which they had together recently selected as a recreation ground for the University of Edinburgh. But the remoteness of this field, and, in the absence of representatives from the Academy and Fettes, the lack of sufficient competition for the Loretto boys deprived the Games of public interest. As time went on, indeed, their function was otherwise supplied. The rise of new schools and the consequent multiplication of cricket and football matches afforded more than the necessary physical stimulus. It was felt that in spring a close time was desirable in the interest of the athletic boy. In 1883 the Games were dropped, and have not since been revived.

But in the early days of which I write we did not suffer from over-competition in any form, but plucked, with no great thought of self-comparison, the blossom of the passing season. Our outdoor life was wonderfully free and various, and among sources of amusement, if not of interest, the Links claimed the foremost place. They were much less crowded then than now, and our own numbers for the five years that followed 1866 averaging less than fifty, there was no danger of our overflowing them to the exclusion of our neighbours. The morning round fitted nicely into the anti-prandial hour of play. There were afternoon rounds on non-football days, and casual rounds at

almost any time, which had their own delights. Johnnie Laidlay once played a round by moonlight, with Tomlinson as 'fore-caddy,' listening for the drop of the ball. But Saturday mornings were the delicious time, for Saturdays were mostly whole holidays in the earlier years. The 'Captain' turned out, with ever new hope; Davie Park had a pleasant word for us as we drove off from the Stand; and somewhere on the course we received and returned the fire of the 'young Doctor's' chaff, who prescribed for putting-greens as well as patients, but with infinitely more solemnity. Somewhere, too, we were likely to meet Willie Park himself, practising some new club for the afternoon round, and now and then had the benefit of an unpaid lesson from him. 'Dinna press, Maister Paterson!' he would say. 'Ye'll mak' a graun gouffer if ye can ware pressin'. Ye see my ba' lyin' here, a maitter of a hunder and fifty yairds frae the hole, and a' they naisty whuns atween; but takin' an easy swing and no pressin' (click!)—ye see I hae drappit her just ahint the pin.'

The Head himself played almost every morning, but was far too fond of discussion for the 'young Doctor,' whose golfing conscience was jealous of rival interests. Archie Park used to carry for the Head on these occasions, and some of us small boys for the bigger boys who made up the foursome, for this was a kind of fagging that still survived. When I grew bigger I played with the Head myself most mornings, but so keen were our arguments upon the relative merits of Mendelssohn and Handel, or of the Spartan and Athenian types of character, that we often lost count of the match. The Head was particularly fond of playing in bad weather, when few save the stalwarts from Loretto would face the music of the storm. The 'caddies' were surprised at this peculiarity. 'If I was a gentleman,' said Bill Paxton once, 'ye'd no find me playin' gouff on sic a day. I'd be sittin' a' the aifternoon at the fireside, drinkin' sherry and blowin' clouds.'

Of drinking sherry or its substitute among the 'caddies' there was too much even on ordinary days. Not a few of them were broken down with wild living, and were in years much younger than they looked. The profession of

'caddie,' like that of writer of books, is made up of the wrecks of every other : there was scarcely a trade but had its representative among them. There was plenty of good brains upon the Links, brains that had somehow missed their mark. Many of the owners had a merry cast of fun, and some who were not witty in themselves were the cause of mirth in others. The most ludicrous intoxication I ever beheld was enacted on the evening of the great rainy Review by an elderly, and usually very sober, seaman 'caddie,' who danced a hornpipe with indescribable agility and glee for the benefit of the grim policeman on the Musselburgh platform at Waverley. And the strangest inebriation certainly was that exhibited by old P——, when he realised about four holes from home that he was getting the worst of it in a match with H——, the publican, who had challenged him for big stakes with his iron niblick. One hardly knew whether to be amused or shocked, and ended by being very much shocked indeed, when old P—— took to weeping, and swearing, and repeating the Lord's Prayer by turns. Deep chords of nature, too, we sometimes touched in talks with these poor fellows between strokes. 'Why not have a fresh try?' said a Lorettonian once to old C——, who had been deploring the ruin of his life. 'You can still pick yourself up if you will.' 'Aweel, sir,' replied C—— with a musing air, 'I'm thinkin' it's no very weel worth my while.'

But I should do wrong if I left you with the impression that the 'caddies' were all unsteady men. Many were far from that, and, moving to new links as the rage for golf increased, have done well for themselves in life. At Musselburgh itself, too, there was plenty of work to be had, and some of the men on the green did a good trade in selling balls to us. Of these 'Hutchie' was perhaps the chief. He had a wonderful memory. Mr. Beilby, the 'pewters' classical master, returned to Loretto after a twenty years' absence, and met him on the Links. 'Ah, Hutchie,' he cried, 'you don't remember me?' 'I mind ye fine,' replied the vendor of balls. 'Ye owe me five shillins.' But the king of all Musselburgh golfers for us

was Willie Park. That beautiful, easy swing of his was characteristic of the man. There was a grace about him, and a charm in his mellow Doric which made one think of Burns. Such splendid nerve, too, as a golfer! When as a man of more than forty he played the big match with Bob Ferguson, and won on the last green after having been two down at the long hole coming home, we felt quite moved about it, and almost fell into each other's arms.

But in summer the Links quite lost their spell for us. Our hearts were all at Pinkie Mains, practising left-hand catches, and back-cuts, and that subtle leg-twist of the well-pitched slow which eludes the simple-minded slogger. The First Eleven was beaten, as a rule, in early years, but we of the younger set had many a victory. Our matches were chiefly with the multitudinous Academy Class Elevens, and if we could not get the better of the Second of the Thirds, the Third of the Seconds might be reckoned as an easy prey. But there was an element of glorious uncertainty. Sometimes the Second of the 'Geits' proved better than either of them. As we grew bigger, there were matches with genuine Seconds and Thirds of other schools, which were much more formal, and by 1870 the doings of the First Eleven began to claim our attention. They always played with two Masters, the Head and J. Cooke Gray, who was afterwards Headmaster of Blairlodge School. Gray was a genial, humorous giant of a man, with a good eye for a boy, and an ample fund of common-sense and energy and ability of various kinds, as the sequel showed. At cricket he bowled fast and hit hard, and was indeed the mainstay of our side. It was in 1872 that we first beat the Academy at cricket, and in 1874 that the serious matches with Fettes College began. We were 'Champion School' that year, as we had been in 1872, and were now full of School pride and patriotism, as the Head had always known we would be, if such a primacy could be brought within reach. For, if you will let me tell you an educational secret undreamt of by the Germans, a school that is always beaten in its matches is a cowed and spiritless school, unless indeed it sees a chance of reversing the turn of fortune and plays

uphill matches gallantly, in which case, no doubt, it is the bravest school of all. We had fought our way through this latter period, and were now in our heyday, so far at least as cricket was concerned.

But, as I have said, there was no great stress of competition then. Most of our matches were of the pleasant, homy kind, with clubs. They began usually at eleven o'clock. Edinburgh had not yet banished her leisured youth. Scotland was a much less busy country then than now. We used to have great matches with the Brunswick Club, when the scores often ran wonderfully small on each side, delightful contests also with Selkirk, where local interest in the game was keen. 'Hae, Lorette!' the Border boys used to cry if we experienced a reverse, 'ye're dirty licket!' But of all the matches of the early 'seventies' none were as charming as the games with the First Royal Dragoons. For us rather serious Scotch boys it was quite an education to have these gallant fellows upon the field. They seemed to have that endless joy of living which Bagehot attributes to the typical cavalier. The fun was always flying. A gigantic member of the Ames family, who answered to the name of 'Gulliver' and stood short-leg, was the occasion of much of it. But 'Lunie' M——, a handsome black-eyed Irishman (or was he a Highlander?), who stood umpire in a light driving-coat, was independent of special sources of amusement, and took an excellent 'rise' out of somebody almost every over. They had some capital cricketers among them too, although the last time we met them we managed to keep them fielding all day, for it was long before the introduction of the closure.

The regiment struck up quite a friendship with the Head, who lent them the field for matches every now and then, in particular, for one great match with Lasswade, when the Head himself and one of his boys played for the latter club. The soldiers gave a luxurious lunch in the 'Lion's Den,' which served us for pavilion. (The Head had bought it from a travelling menagerie, its original inmate having died on a visit to Musselburgh.) On this occasion he had to wink at a violation of his principles in the matter of the

champagne lunch ; but was a good deal alarmed, as some of the subalterns began plying his pupil with modest beakers of the generous beverage. 'It's no stuff to bat on,' he kept saying as he looked anxiously down the table. 'You'll never make a run.' But when the boy played an innings which was clearly the better for the vinous encouragement, the Head changed his opinion with characteristic open-mindedness, and for some weeks had champagne brought to the field on match days, and primed his pupil with a glass of it before every important innings. Cotterill of Fettes assailed him about this practice, which he very properly condemned from the Puritan point of view ; but the Head regarded it, as indeed he did most things, from the scientific side.

As a cricketer in Torquay days, the Head had been an excellent point, a good fast bowler, and a steady, if by no means a brilliant, batsman who had made a special study of the back-cut. On one occasion about the year 1874 he gave the First Eleven a special exposition of this stroke, but refining a little under the influence of the 'gallery,' sent the off-stump flying to our great delight. Yet he was master of the back-cut at one time, and never wholly lost his skill. His fast round-arm bowling was preluded by several strange little skips, profanely compared by one of the 'pewters' to the efforts of a flustered rook to come to a standstill on a windy day. Yet in early seasons at Loretto it was telling, if erratic. But cricket is not a game for middle age. In the 'seventies' these excellences of our Master's play had in the main disappeared. Like most men of forty he had a way of putting up his hand just after a possible catch had whizzed by. 'Could I have got that, Tomlinson?' he would ask, when the fourth run had been recorded. 'I dare say E. M. would have had her,' Tomlinson would reply with ready tact. As a batsman, he had contracted a habit of playing the ball with his right knee, which got him out frequently l.b.w. The fast round-arm had made way for lobs which, although sometimes effective, were, as a rule, expensive bowling. Yet there cannot be a doubt that, until the season of 1880, when he resigned

his place in the Eleven, and even for long after, he was the life and soul of Loretto cricket, as indeed he was at all times the inspiring source of Loretto character, to the formation of which his continual presence on the field in summer in no small degree contributed.

Mr. C. Wordsworth, in his contribution to the *Memories*,* gives us a glimpse of the Head at 'Fields out':—

"Double"† is over and work is over (no "extra quarter"), and there is "Fields out" for the First Side at Pinkie. Things go on with more or less keenness, till over in the corner by the gate we see the Head getting out of his pony-trap. Now, every man of you, wake up, and be on your toes, or you will hear of it! Though you may bowl like Shaw and bat like Grace, you won't get into the Loretto Eleven till you can field.'

This little sketch belongs in date to 1897 or so, but was equally true of my time, and of the effect of all his appearances upon the field. He was an endless source of fun as well as of energy. The game of cricket is hardly suited to the Scottish temper or climate, but the Head's merriment and high spirits were proof against both. When the match was going ill, indeed, and he could only watch from the side the discomfiture of our Eleven, he looked the picture of care. He would seat himself on the hill in that strange oriental posture already referred to, and chew his handkerchief, or pick and eat the daisies that grew near his hand. But so long as there was anything to be done he was the bright, resourceful captain, and knew the game as few.

But cricket, and football, and golf by no means exhausted the list of our recreations. A fives-court was built against the vinery walls about 1870. It is used as a coal-bunker now, but beneath the coal dust you may see the bricks which composed its floor. Other fives-courts of less primitive pattern were erected afterwards, as has been stated, near the mill-lead. Almond encouraged this game more than golf for reasons. On non-football afternoons, for half

* *Some Memories of the Head.* (Printed by Neill and Co., Edinburgh.)

† Assemblies of the whole School in hall, being summoned by a double bell, were called 'Doubles.'

an hour before tea, there was shinty. It is the Scottish form of hockey, and was played in the park with ash sticks and what were known as tennis balls. We never made a science of it. More amusing and spontaneous, and therefore more valuable as play, were the minor games that filled odd intervals of time. Rounders was one of these, but instead of throwing to the man on the base, as in the modern development of the game, we 'dumped' the runner. 'Bobbie' remembers during his first term being carried by the head of his room in triumph round the dormitory, baby-wise, by the knees, for having 'dumped' 'Jack' Cathcart, who, as all the world knows, dropped a goal in the second football match against England a few years later. 'Dog and Cat' was another excellent game. It is suited to boys of every race and clime. The writer once taught it to two sportless French boys in the scanty clearing of a Swiss hotel during the intervals of a mountain storm. The poor fellows were wild with excitement. A plot of ground, a three-foot 'Dog,' a five-inch 'Cat'—you may cut them with a pocket-knife from almost any tree—and the game is yours.

But these diversions, dear as they were to our young minds, stooped their crests to 'Dex' and 'Goosie.' 'Goosie' was a spring and autumn game. It was played in the yard during the twenty minutes that came between tea and first evening hour. The kerb stone of the play-shed was one goal-line: a furrow drawn in the gravel opposite, beneath the windows of 'Gilead,' and 'Big' and 'Little Bashan,' served for the other. A couple of boys were chosen to stand in the space between and bar the passage. The rest tried to elude them and run from line to line. Those who were caught joined the side of their captors. As the forces of the 'collaring' party were thus always augmenting in proportion as the number of the runners diminished, the field of play grew more and more beset, and it became increasingly difficult to get across. Yet it was wonderful how a clever runner, making dexterous feints, and then seizing the happy moment, could clear the narrow space time after time. 'Goosie' disappeared about 1872. Mrs. Weaver, it is probable, made one of her unreasonable

protests about the knees of knickerbockers. As we ourselves grew bigger there was more danger of accidents from striking against walls and pillars. Perhaps the numbers of the School had grown too big for the yard. Attempts have been made to revive the game from time to time, but never with much success. 'Goosie,' as we knew it, has gone, but 'Dex' is still in its glory.

'Dex,' a name of scornful classic origin, is little cricket. It was held at first by fanatics to interfere with the more serious game, but this we put aside. It was played in early days with any kind of bat or ball. The 'Cheeper' once made to himself a mighty bat which was as invincible as the shield of Ajax. You might bowl at it all a morning play-hour and never once get by. But, in general, 'Dex' is played with a twopenny tennis ball and a 'porringer,' which last is not, as you might fancy, a thing to eat your supper out of, but a stick that might stir the same—in fact, a porridge-stick. Enthusiasts of letter F have been known of recent years to leave their beds at dewy six o'clock of a fine June morning, and make the orchard ring to their shouts in the match, 'Pyjamas *versus* Night-shirts.' But we were not so wakeful. The half-hour after prayers in the long twilight of Scottish summer evenings was the golden time for 'Dex.' It was then that the great matches took place, and the record hits and bowling feats were made.

Yet summer was our most monotonous time in the way of outdoor life. It was all cricket in one form or another. Winter and spring supplied us with many more pursuits. Of these catapulting was from our point of view a delightful sport, if questionable from the sparrows'. But we seldom did them much harm. Our *battues* were usually as bloodless as Mr. Winkle's. Yet 'Piggie' would bring in several birds at times—'sprugs,' 'chaffies,' and so forth, which he skinned with a penknife and roasted at the old chapel fire; and 'Sow,' his elder brother, once killed a hare. But that was in the holidays. Hares were seldom seen near Musselburgh. The miners objected to them.

In the spring catapulters mostly became birds'-nesters, and some of them found plenty of eggs. Shore-shooting

on the tidal reaches of the Firth was a kindred pastime. Troops of sea-birds visited the long beach that lies off the Links. It was here that Bill Caldwell nourished his ornithologic youth. He had cupboards full of the mummies of dead birds and redolent of scientific odours.

In spring and autumn, as preparatory to the football and training seasons, took place the 'grinds.' Boys of fit age started for the 'Grinds' by an early Saturday train, and separating at the Waverley into two parties, conveyed each the stockings and greatcoats of the other faction to opposite ends of the 'grind.' There they left them in the hotels, ordered their friends' teas, and set forth. Selkirk to Peebles, where the path runs through the 'Dowie Dens of Yarrow,' was a favourite grind, as was Penicuik to Mid-Calder. There were many different ways of dealing with a 'grind.' Some boys ran the first five miles or so, and played themselves out. Others, less ambitious, kept Mr. Burrow or the 'Captain' well in sight, contented so long as tea-time brought them in sight of Peebles and its 'pleasures,' or to the welcome of the Fleece Hotel at Selkirk. Some took short-cuts and arrived haggard and footsore, just in time to catch the homeward train. Others, untroubled by sportsmanlike ideas, came in on friendly carts. But all of every sort were glad enough to turn in that night, and slept as sound as lift-boys till the 'Skipper's' naval cries and stately chorale reminded them it was the blessed Sabbath morning.

Twice a year, in spring and autumn, we went in drags to Gullane, and played golf in that sunny, blowy haunt of wheeling peewits and soaring larks. Lunch at the Golf Inn between rounds—beefsteak pie and shandygaff—was a great refreshment, and all the way home by Gosford woods we regaled our hearts with song. The best was certainly 'The Royal Wild Beast Show,' trolled in lusty baritone by 'Jones,' the flutist.

The camomiles, the crocodiles, and all that you could wish!
The mice, the rats, the tabby-cats, and other kinds of fish!
A dozen Sphinxes upside down, all standing in a row!
It's only sixpence each to see the Royal Wild Beast Show—

this was the chorus. But Fred's 'Cannibal Island' was almost as good. It's chorus ran thus :—

Jamsee Jeemsee jabajehoy,
 Jabbery dory pory,
 Haikee paikee saikee craikee,
 Chillingo wullaba dory.

This was a specimen of cannibal talk. But when we reached Aberlady, our music was interrupted by the small 'caddies,' who ran out of the houses, and followed us with cries of 'Poor oot ! Poor oot !' which is the lowland equivalent for 'Bakshish !' At every village along the road we drew after us a tail of these ragged little beggars, and threw them pennies to scramble for. It was a happy, roaring drive, but at choir practice that night our liquid notes were veiled.

But of all our ploys, whether of summer or winter, or of the waxing and waning year, skating was far the first. As soon as there was bearing ice, we stopped work about mid-day, and made our ways to the Braid Hill ponds, or Dunsappie, as eager as young pointers when they take the heather. But although in light frosts we frequented these lesser lochs, the true scene of our sport was Duddingston—the wide expanse of water that lies below the southern bluffs of Arthur Seat. Here we diverted ourselves for three short hours ere we returned for evening work, practising figures, playing cross-tig (the policemen, as a rule, stopped shinty), and enjoying the varied life of the loch. About two o'clock the Edinburgh Skating Club, majestic men in high hats and black coats, put down their wooden balls, and began their stately evolutions. It was a beautiful and solemn sight, all grace and dignity. For broad comedy and roaring farce, on the other hand, there were the curling-rinks. 'Div ye see that stane, John? Awa' wi' him !—Hoot, lad, ye've nae mair smeddum nor a flea !' 'Soop, bailie ! Soop, man ! Ye're nae half soopin'. Soop !' 'You for a curler, meenister ! Ye've dinged them a' to glory.' The sliders near the Queen's Drive were well worth a look—wonderful fellows, who could go the whole length of a forty yards' slide with one foot in the air. Then there were the apple-wives with their tables, and ginger-beer and coffee men with

their little tents and tripods, very useful for warming cold hands ; all manner of loafers, too, hiring out chairs, putting on skates, clearing the ice if there was snow—honest workmen, some of them, but mostly of the blear-eyed, whiskyfied, vagrant order,—the modern friars, whom pious ladies maintain upon the public roads, lest they should lose the pleasures of benevolence. The long, still alleys of black ice, hidden from sight among the tall reeds at the west end of the loch, gave us a sense of poetry. Here, in some forgotten corner, we might find the swans, frozen out of the rest of their domain. As the day wore on, the crowd thickened. On Saturday afternoons, in particular, the clerks and business men turned out, and the loch became a moving, roaring mass of skaters, curlers, sliders, vendors, loungers, with the Newington smoke weaving a prismatic background for them, and the jolly, red-faced sun peering at them round the shoulder of Arthur Seat.

With sunset at Duddingston this sketch of our outdoor life at Loretto may fitly conclude. Perhaps it has already been too much prolonged. If there be among my readers some person of superior intellectual pose, one of the sublime, explanatory, professorial sort, he has, no doubt, long since been turning impatiently in his chair, and venting scornful wit. But these things have their place in the burgeoning life of youth, and if thou, O god-like Doctor of Paideutics, art minded to sniff at them, nay, to thrust them even altogether out of thy trim Dutch garden of a school, it is because the merest elements of science, as applied to the nurture of the human boy, have never contrived to penetrate the crass envelope of that seraphic intellect of thine.

CHAPTER VII

LIFE AT LORETTO—*continued*: WAYS OF THE PLACE

SUCH, then, reader, were the sports and diversions with which we relieved the sedentary labours of the week. But even indoors the scent of the wide air was always about us. 'Bilshky,' perhaps, in early days, carried matters too far. Even in stormy nights he would open every available aperture, and be found in the morning by the 'Skipper' slumbering peacefully, his stiff hair rustling in the breeze. But we were all devout lovers of the fresh air, and knew its use as a prophylactic of consumption twenty years before the doctors surmised it.

'O what a smell of boy!' cried Craig Lang once in the 'old chapel,'* as he rushed to open windows. But the experience was a rare one. It was difficult to find anywhere at Loretto what boys call a 'froust.' Except in gales, bedroom windows were always kept well open at night. In that hurried moment when the minute-bell had begun ringing for morning prayers we flung them wider yet. It was a point of conscience with us to turn back the bed-clothes before we left the room, and hang up our night-shirts to air. We had a passion for cleanliness, too, and took, and compelled reluctant new boys to take, cold baths every morning. A friend relates that 'Fatty' threatened him with a serious licking once, because, in his daily ablutions (so 'Fatty' alleged), he was less successful than he might be. 'Fatty' was about fourteen at the time, and occupied no official position. In winter cold baths were

* Like many other rooms in the old house, this room has seen a number of changes. Clive built it as a hayloft; Dr. Langhorne made it the boys' chapel; Almond turned it into a schoolroom, but the pulpit still remained at the far end; it is now used as servants' quarters.

unquestionably cold. It required some courage to sit down among the ice, and sponge ourselves on frosty mornings. But we had the courage. Hot water, 'just to take the chill off, you know,' was a concession that came later. At times our hands suffered a trifle from our Spartan practice. Chaps and chilblains marred their symmetry. These in most cases had disappeared by the beginning of April, but 'Wattie's' hands were seldom presentable before the first of June. Of fresh air, too, we had, now and then, perhaps too much. 'Ah!' Canon Tristram cried one morning, as the Head showed him the dormitories that led to the 'Sanctum.' 'The draughts in these rooms remind me of the dawn-winds on the high lands of Gilead and Bashan.' These draughts were pretty shrewd at times. No modern devices then contended with the fury of the blasts that rushed down the long passage from the swing-door by Clive's coach entry to the pillared portico, clearing 'Jeff's' eyes for a moment as he trotted sneezing at the 'Skipper's' heels, and waving the old lady's cap-strings when she tried to close the swing-door at her end of the building, which the Head was always leaving open. Not that we minded these airy experiences so long as we could keep moving, but in schoolrooms, where stillness was demanded, the cold was often bitter. It was in vain that 'Jinks' heaped his fire in frosty weather. The warmth never penetrated to the desks along the walls. We lost all feeling in our feet, and trotted sometimes twice round the garden before we could make sure we had them. It was long before the days of hot pipes.

On the other hand, we had plenty of good food to supply our heat-producing centres. English public schools are beginning, it may be, now to learn what the term 'break-fast' means. But we knew it thirty years ago. With a plate of steaming porridge—not the miserable saltless mess served up under this name beyond the Border, nor yet the spurious American substitute with half the flavour crushed out of the meal by patent rollers—but genuine Scotch porridge, loved of man and beast, and milk *ad libitum* to cool it; with a good Scotch baker's roll (the delectable kind, with the flour on the under side) enfolding a swathe of

butter ; with a herring, or a plate of bacon, or the shoulders of a Finnan haddie beneath his belt, a Loretto boy cared little whether the wind was east or west. If the wolf of hunger assailed us again at eleven or so, there was always one of the 'Skipper's' loaves on a platter outside Mrs. Weaver's room. 'Ye maunna do that,' said a temporary matron once, when the Head gave her this order—she had had experience of a different system—'Ye maunna do that. Laddies are aye stairvin' wi' hunger. They'll tear it to pieces.' But the Head had other notions. Dinner, too, at one o'clock was a hearty meal—two helpings each of meat and two of pudding. Then the oat-cakes and scones which we fetched from Wilson's or Hunter's in little paper bags for tea—how delightful they were with the School salt butter and the jam which somebody usually had from home ! Scotch bun, indeed—that rich, black, Christmas compound, known familiarly as 'sudden death,' was under interdict. The Head would none of it. Like certain pies, hereafter mentioned, it was apt to become a missile weapon. But of the simple cakes with which our thoughtful mothers supplied us we had our will, and we did them ample justice. What appetites we had in these days, brothers ! And what lovely complexions ! But then we deserved to have them. We had not spoilt our stomachs with incessant 'tuck,' or shirked the wind and rain in stormy weather, or, again, spent large parts of our play-time in doing penal tasks for outraged masters or prefects—hundreds of Latin lines written with three pens tied together, pages of Greek tragedians with the accents, reams of copy-books. *Impositions were unknown.* 'Jinks,' indeed, one day when the grim fit was heavy on him, or I had made more blots than usual, set me a long one. But when I had toiled at the horrid thing for an hour or so in the temper of a lost spirit, the Head happened to come in, and cast the devil out of Jinks. In our happy family life there was no great need of punishment. We blew off our superfluous energies in the open air. If we grew too careless, or noisy, or unpunctual, justice descended upon us in the shape of the cane. We had no sense of personal indignity in connection with this instrument. Our

nurses had smacked us at an earlier period. It appeared quite natural to us that our masters should cane us now. 'Switching' was a different matter. It was a rare punishment, reserved for grave offences. We recognised it as disgraceful. But we did not consider caning so. It was a convenient means of checking current offences, and if we had to be punished, we liked this method best. It left us our freedom and our leisure, and freedom, in the best sense of that much abused term, was the peculiar mark of Loretto.

The Head had no confidence in mechanical methods of government. He had too much respect for our gymnastic powers to trust to physical barriers as a means of controlling us. There were no irons on the ground-floor windows to keep us in at night. Outer doors were locked when the old lady or the 'Skipper' went to bed, but the keys remained always on the inside. If our life knew little of bolts or bars, it knew as little of roll-calls or bounds. Leaves had to be got for this and that, lest we should shoot ourselves with guns, or drown ourselves in some mad bathing excursion, or encounter 'the cholera' or 'the scarlet fever' in the wynds of Newbigging. But there was no difficulty in obtaining reasonable leaves. We skirmished freely over the country-side. School lessons and School games made their regular demands upon us. But they did not possess us wholly, or squeeze us dry. We were not badgered with continual examinations, or working always against time for marks. The School routine was not constructed with the view of occupying every minute of the week. There were always plenty of hours when we were at liberty to consult our individual tastes, and give the rein to our personal 'hobbies,' whatever these might be.

For many of these leisure pursuits after-prayers was the golden time. In winter, literary boys read books; sociable boys chatted with their friends; musical boys practised their instruments; ornithological boys skinned birds; handy boys netted, or worked fret-saws; rowdy boys 'bear-fought,' or hurled pillows. This last diversion, indeed, was practised under certain risks, as we may learn from the

following passage, which is taken from one of the papers in the *Memories* :—

‘I am a little boy in letter I, engaged in a furious pillow-fight after prayers. My adversary flies before me, and as he escapes from the room, I (or is it Stuart Wright?) hurl a pillow after him. But what is that loud and hasty step advancing along the passage? The Head is upon us. His complexion is very yellow in these years, and in anger becomes positively black. This appalling phenomenon is witnessed now. He makes two quick strides towards me, and, but for my skill in guarding, would have boxed my ears. Then follow winged words, and he leaves us to return in ten minutes. When he enters, he has recovered his composure. There is the usual silence while we say our prayers, and just before he turns out the light, he says, “I’m sorry I lost my temper with you, Bobbie, but, you know, you were very annoying just then.” I express regret. “I’m to keep my temper, and you’re to drop pillow-fighting. Is that a bargain? Eh?” “Yes, sir,” we reply. “Good-night, then!” cries the Head cheerily. “Good-night!” we answer, and away he hurries to another room.’

Another passage from the *Memories*, however, shows that the Head could enter into the humour of such escapades. Mr. Norman McLachlan is the writer :—

‘Talking of traps puts me in mind of a delightful story of the Head and a “boobytrap.” The scene of this adventure was letter F, which then, as possibly still, had a well-founded reputation for wild doings. A trap of the usual description, a large wet sponge, had been carefully set for the benefit of Mr. Burrow, who was then house-master. The Head’s step was heard coming along the passage, but the rapidity of his approach left no time to remove the trap, and the next moment he had bounced into the room, and received the sponge right on the top of his head. The room was apparently empty, for not a boy was to be seen. But presently from behind the beds appeared eight scared faces, whose owners hastened to explain that it had not been meant

for him, but for Mr. Burrow. And then nothing would please him but that the trap should be set again, and that he, too, should hide behind the bed and watch the result. In a few minutes Burrow came in, and was also effectually trapped ; and the consequences might have been unpleasant for the trappers, if the Head had not burst into a peal of laughter, and jumping up from behind the bed, pacified the dripping Burrow by telling him that he, too, had just been caught.'

Or again :—

'He would come round the bedrooms between bed-bell and lights-out and sit chatting on our beds, and then as always, whatever he said was worth listening to, and interesting even to the smallest of us. And often he would "rag" with us, joining in a pillow-fight, or struggling to free himself from the clutches of half-a-dozen small boys. It was a favourite thing with him to sit of an evening after prayers on the stairs leading up to letter O, which was then the head-boy's room, and gather a crowd of us round him, when he would single out some one to sing a song, or would tell us stories—stories of cricket and football, of great deeds of past heroes of the School, of Wakelin's wonderful catch on the Links, of "Bilshky" Forman's marvellous memory, of his own College days, and the Master of Balliol, and the sayings and doings of Blades ;* and would get us to talk too.'

This passage is charmingly characteristic of the Head and after-prayers time at Loretto in winter. But in summer, as has been mentioned already, we were all out in the orchard playing 'Dex'; or walking round the garden with our friends to cull the tender lettuce and tasty radish from the beds old Benjie had provided for us ; or lying under the elm-trees on the mound, tracing the pattern of the boughs against the sky ; or 'slithering' half-way down the mound, till we rested in 'Forman's Seat.' For here, so ran the legend, by dint of often sitting, 'Bilshky's' younger brother had hollowed out a depression most grateful

* Better known as C. S. Calverley.

to the human form. Here, too, 'Bilshky' himself had sat, and infinitely talked. Here he had discussed the treatment of 'stymies' and the uses of the heavy iron, the theory of leg 'draws' and the art of off 'snicks.' Here he had spouted Horace and Juvenal, and the place still breathed of his varied interests.

CHAPTER VIII

LIFE AT LORETTO—*continued*: THE HEAD'S NEW RELIGION
AND OUR RECEPTION OF IT

NOT that we, at the date I write of, had any great affection for pure scholarship. Our intellectual processes were guided upon other lines. A spirit was at work in our little society, a spirit at once deeply philosophical and intensely practical, which, little by little, propounded a kind of new religion for us. This religion had much in common with that other religion, of revelation and custom, which our parents and pastors and schoolfellows had imparted to us. But yet it struck us as strange. It seemed to proceed upon other principles and to aim at other objects. Its prohibitions and injunctions, indeed, were drawn from the former code. But it took them in a fresh order and presented them in an unfamiliar guise. Even when the commands were the same, the motive and spirit were different. We must not do things, because other boys did them. This was (or easily might be) 'following a multitude to do evil.' We must not do things in a certain way, because we had always done them that way before. This was 'getting into a groove.' We must not think as other people thought simply because they thought so. Other people seldom used their heads. We must not mind what other people said of us. 'They say. What say they? Let them say!' Other people asked what was usual to be done. We must ask what was right and reasonable to be done. Other people conformed and accepted. We must stand out and prove. Other people ignored the light, or were too timid to follow it, in matters of habit. We must discover the light in matters of habit, and hold it up on high. In par-

ticular, we must do this where habit had a bearing on physical well-being. The laws of physical well-being were the laws of God. For human beings they were the most elemental of His laws and the least doubtful; the most imperative but—the most disregarded. The neglect of former centuries was excused by their ignorance. Our age could advance no similar plea. Modern knowledge laid on us a new obligation. The times summoned us to a new revival. The upper class was living in the most preposterous manner. This was why the upper class had neuralgia, and consumption, and pains in its stomach and great toe. The labouring class was rushing into towns—to lose its manhood there. It was impossible to rear a healthy race in foul air and darkness. Stewed in factories, and cooped in tenements and slums, the British stock would waste. Public men were blind to this main peril of the age. They could not read the handwriting on the wall. Macaulay had talked grandiloquently of the ceaseless progress of our time. It was a period of decay. Gladstone raved of ‘leaps and bounds.’ We were leaping and bounding down the sides of the steep abyss, the gulf wide and bottomless, reserved for such nations as defy the fundamental laws of life.

Something must be done to stay this furious decadence. Somebody must make a beginning. We must not laugh and say that Loretto was too small to do anything. It was small, no doubt, but it was large enough. In such enterprises it was not the big battalions that proved the stronger. It was the little regiment of the ‘men that lapped.’ The little battalions need not always remain the little battalions. The little battalions of to-day were the big battalions of to-morrow. Great reforms always had their origin in some petty movement. Great reforms had always begun in a minority of one.

All which notions we boys, in the first instance (remember, it was nearly forty years ago), pronounced among ourselves to be ‘all rot’; as indeed, in their own more decorous phrase, did most writers, merchants, bankers, in fact (outside the circle of our own families), most sensible business persons to whom we might happen to mention

them. 'Society living foolishly?' they cried. 'How else did Almond want society to live? The country going downhill? The country was never more prosperous. Let Almond glance at the shipping lists. Let him have a look at the revenue returns. Gladstone mistaking the trend of affairs? If there was one thing more remarkable about William Gladstone than another, it was the keenness of his political insight. Almond was a clever fellow, no doubt, but, for their part, they preferred Gladstone to Almond. If we boys wanted to get on in business, we must give more time to our studies; and, in particular, pay less attention to games. It was not by drop-kicking and leg-hitting that men rose in the world, but by finding their way into good offices, for instance (the sooner the better!), and keeping their noses to the grindstone once they got there. A good handwriting was very important, and to be able to cast up figures quickly. Look at Mr. Boag's son now, who had just been taken in by M'Scrimpie and Clutch. Had anybody ever heard of young Boag wasting his time at pole-jumping, or running about without his bonnet in the rain? No indeed! He requested to be put into his father's office at fifteen, and had never taken more than a fortnight's holiday ever since (except the month that he took when he married Savin's daughter). And that was why he had been chosen by this great and growing firm, of which there was little doubt he would be the principal partner before long, as old M'Scrimpie was getting very shaky, and Clutch was rather fond of dining out. Boag, on the other hand, was a very steady fellow, with a genuine passion for business. It was men like Boag that came to the front. It was men like Boag that won the prizes of life. We should imitate Boag.'

It was all very well for sensible persons to improve the occasion in this manner. Our frivolity prevented us from rising to the height of their conception. We had a confused feeling that pole-jumping was a much more important thing than these heavy-gaited gentlemen imagined. We would have kicked young Boag into scrimmages had he come to Loretto, and were convinced he would have been

the better for it. But even had it been otherwise, as against Almond and his notions this cult of Boag brought us no help at all. The mere mention of it would have involved us and our well-meaning friends in a storm of ridicule. Almond would have flouted Boag and his ideas. He would have made merry with Boag for a week. He would have pointed morals with Boag on a hundred occasions. He would have used Boag's name for the adornment of innumerable tales. He would have tossed Boag here, and bandied Boag there. Tiring of him at last, he would have consigned him solemnly, with due benefit of clergy, to an early grave, prophesying for him, in fact, that premature demise which has since committed the main profits of M'Scrimpie and Clutch's business to less eager hands. In the curious chess-match which we were playing with our chief the Boag gambit would have been a disastrous opening for us to try. We never for a moment thought of such a thing. We were thrown back upon our own resources. We had to tackle Almond ourselves brain to brain. He was certainly an awkward customer for boys to tackle.

He was always talking to us of large ideas, as I have endeavoured to indicate—of the existence of divine laws of physical well-being; of the obligation to obey these laws; of the rich man's defiance of them; of the poor man's ignorance of them; of the present unhappiness and threatened ruin of the British race in consequence; of the need of a new science to study these laws, of a new philanthropy to preach them, of a new statesmanship to apply them; or, again, of the blinding power of custom in regard to social habit; of the value, therefore, of eccentricity; and so forth. But he had always, also, some definite proposal to make to us, something which he wanted us boys to do—a paltry thing, no doubt, unworthy of the attention of sensible persons, but still something—a new habit which we were to adopt, an example which we were to set, a step in advance, a beginning in practice, an attempt to realise the big scheme. In 1862, the very first year, it was sleeping with open windows. In the same year it was the disuse of linen shirts and collars and town suits of close material

for ordinary school wear, in favour of tweed knickerbocker suits of loose texture, and flannel shirts worn open at the neck without neckties. Two years later, in 1864, it was the practice of the daily morning tub. In 1866 or earlier we formed the habit of taking off our coats in schoolrooms, as soon as the temperature became uncomfortably warm. Except in cold weather, or as a protection in case some master proposed a caning, waistcoats were generally given up about 1868. Wet-weather runs came in a little later. In 1869, or thereabout, we abandoned the practice of eating 'tuck' (in our vocabulary 'grub') between meals. Bare heads, except on hot days and Sundays, became the rule in Musselburgh and its neighbourhood about the year 1870. In 1871 or so we began playing golf without coats in mild weather. In 1872 we took to wearing boots the shape of our feet—'anatomical' boots, as they were then called. The practice of changing into flannels for all forms of violent exercise, not only for cricket and football, came into use about the same time. Flannel dressing began to take the place of tweed dressing for all-day wear about 1874.

These 'experiments in living,' as John Stuart Mill would have called them, were never introduced by fiat. Some of them, like the disuse of caps and waistcoats, although encouraged, were not suggested by Almond. They grew naturally out of the vigorous, rough-and-tumble life we were living. Tweed dressing, open windows, and cold baths we welcomed as hardy Scottish boys. But the 'non-grubbing' rule touched our lower appetites. We opposed it stoutly. Changing for fives, and other violent sports of a minor character, was a nuisance. We resisted it too. The adoption of anatomical boots, and of the practice of playing golf without coats, made us eccentric; and if there is one thing the British boy detests more than another, it is being laughed at and stared at and looked upon as a peculiar person. The chess-match which decided the fate of these two proposals was long and keenly contested. Had Almond attempted to force his ideas upon us, he and his School would have made shipwreck. The Scottish character is not wanting in backbone. The blood of our

Covenanting and Nonjuring ancestors would have been stirred. We should have offered a sullen opposition, or broken out into open mutiny, or persuaded our parents to take us away. Almond knew better than to get on the wrong side of Scottish boys. In matters of ordinary discipline he was imperious enough. But if some new experiment in living was in his mind, he disclaimed force altogether. He trusted wholly to persuasion.

His method was strangely individual, and humorously characteristic at once of himself and of the School. The intellectual life of thoughtful boys at Loretto was always extraordinarily keen. Not a measure in politics or a scheme of philanthropy, not a theory of morals or a method in sport but had its echoes in the endless discussions of our happy family. But, for the main body of the School, it was the practical proposals of our chief that introduced the disquieting element, that roused us from the slumber of routine, that compelled us to select our argumentative weapons, and make good or surrender our ideas, as it were, at the rapier's point.

One never knew at what time the new notion might make its first appearance. It might be between strokes at golf, when the Head and his partner had overwalked their ball by forty yards, and their opponents were calling on them to return; or it might be in the intervals of a cricket-match, when the game had ceased to demand our undivided attention; or again, as we trotted with him down the Hundred from the queer old court by the vinery; or under the ruined wall of Falside Castle, as we sheltered for a moment from the storm. But more often it was at tea in the private dining-room that the new idea would pop out, perplexing the old lady with fears of change, and encountering, on all occasions, her gentle but despairing obstruction. ('My mother, you must know,' the Head once explained to a visitor, 'is the Leader of the Opposition.') From the old lady's tea-table the Head would himself carry it straightway to the head-boy's room, where that great official would receive it with all the gravity which his responsibilities imposed upon him. Mr. Burrow would examine it in his genial, disinterested

way. 'Goldie' would quizz it from the Heidelberg point of view. The 'Captain' would welcome or denounce it, with flashing eyes. 'Jinks' would bid his boys 'stop ta-alking about it,' and proceed to the dictation of the day. From the criticism of the masters it would pass to the comments of other functionaries. Tomlinson would look in upon the Head on his way down to the field to have his say upon it. Mrs. Weaver, primed already by the old lady, would assail the Head about it the first time he entered her room. The 'young Doctor' would have his skit at it, when he came in to chaff us for having cut our fingers. Archie Park would make a sly allusion to it, as he handed the Head his heavy iron. The 'Skipper' would dust his flute, and laugh, and say it reminded him of something he had once seen in the China Seas. And meanwhile the prefects were debating it, the Fifth abusing it, the Middles 'guying' it, the 'Nippers' making songs of it, till the whole place seethed, and fizzed, and hummed about it, like a pot-a-boil, a champagne bottle half uncorked, a hive of angry bees. But sooner or later all criticisms and objections and defiances had to pass the ordeal of the Head's own searching dialectic. For us boys there was no shirking it. We were like young Athenians spell-bound in the market-place; we had to answer our School Socrates, whether we would or no. But we were not unwilling. We were Scottish boys, and had a taste for argument ourselves. In a case of this kind, we were not in the least afraid of the Head. He encouraged a freedom in us which we would never have ventured upon with our own parents. As a rule we resisted the strange proposal. We barked at it lustily, like valiant young British dogs as we were. We launched our thin red line upon it in an honest frontal attack. We galloped round casuistical kopjes, and tried to fall upon its rear. We took a high line, and pounced upon it, so to speak, from balloons. We took a low line, and tried to blow it sky-high as from a mine. We said more than we had meant, and retracted. We lost our temper, and apologised. But whatever our changing moods might be, the Head was always the same—glowing with high spirits, beaming with

good-humour, delighted to discuss, anxious to be convinced, bringing all his various learning to bear upon the momentous point at issue. He would quote a paragraph from Mill's treatise *On Liberty* to prove the importance of the principle at stake. He would cite a passage from Spencer's lately republished essay on *Education* to show its special applicability to a school. He would refer to some forgotten letter of Dr. Arnold. He would mention a recent article in the *Lancet*. Lycurgus, he would point out, would have relished his proposal, Plato would have welcomed it, 'Pup' (now 'Pup' was in those days about ten years of age and lived with Kenneth, Robin, and another in a dormitory known as 'The Nursery' under Mrs. Weaver's special charge) had said something which strongly supported it. That very morning a letter had arrived from an old boy in California, declaring it to be the very thing that was required. He ridiculed the timid old ladies who would be shocked at it, the 'seedy professors' who would sniff at it, Boag and his friends who would protest that it was altogether apart from the true purposes of education. And all this time we were hunting the hare he had started for us, with an interest almost equal to his own, or rather, we were trying to baffle this fleet hound of argument, and save the nimble hare from his inevitable fangs. Sometimes we succeeded. Sometimes we convinced him that there was something radically unsound about the hare, in fact, that she was not a hare at all, but a rather unpleasant kind of pole-cat. Sometimes we diverted his pursuit to some slightly different hare. But more often he persuaded us that here was a splendid hare, that she was finer than any of the other hares we had run down and jugged together, that she had not been hunted of recent years, and indeed was hard to catch, but that we were the very fellows to catch her. And with that he raised an argumentative view-holloa, and set off pursuing her again. We were seized with the infection of the sport. We would do anything to catch that hare. We hunted her across the fallows of ordinary life. We tracked her up the mountains of high moral comment. We cleared the obstacles with which Boag and his admirers beset our path. We laughed

at the interdictory placards and menacing umbrella of Mrs. Grundy. At last we ran down our hare. And when we had run her down, our triumph was almost as great as our leader's. If he had found the hare, we had chased her. If he was the huntsman, we were the pack. We felt she was almost as much our hare as his.

But I am riding my harrier simile to death. Let me dismount ere the poor thing founder altogether, and set my feet upon the common earth. In plain speech, then, Almond usually convinced us of the feasibility of his plan. We tried it, and found it answer. We took it into our everyday life. We made it part of the gathering traditions of the School. And when we had thus adopted it, we cared nothing for the opinion of the outside world. We were ready to maintain it against all and sundry with the fidelity of Mahometan converts.

CHAPTER IX

SCOTTISH OPINION AND PRACTICE WITH REGARD TO MATTERS OF PHYSICAL HABIT IN 1870

THE Loretto boy, coatless, capless, in warm weather of late years even in socks and 'cuts,' may be met with anywhere in Scotland now. You may find him dangling from a rope on the sunny side of the Bass Rock, photographing or looking for eggs. You may meet him free-wheeling—red coat on handle-bars—down the long slope that leads from Comrie to Loch Earn. You may observe him hauling at a scringe-net on the coast of Mull; or plying a fishing-rod or a geological hammer among the primeval hills and innumerable lochs of Sutherland. In all these situations he and his comfortable undress have long ceased to attract surprised attention. The public has grown used to his ways, for the good reason that the public has adopted them. They have become, in great measure, if not entirely, the ordinary ways of Scottish public school boys. From them they have passed to their seniors, and are already, to no inconsiderable extent, the practice of vigorous Scottish men. But when we began to give illustrations of them about the year 1870, it will scarcely be believed how eccentric and ridiculous they appeared. Boots made in the shape of a foot excite little remark now. But they created a sensation in 1872. Mothers were distracted, sisters were horrified at the dreadful appearance of our footgear. The natural shape? Nonsense! The baby was fetched down blinking from the cradle, and his little pink feet uncrumpled to confute us. The village boy was stopped on his way home from school, and his footprints examined to furnish evidence against us. And when the unsophisticated toe of childhood was seen to point in the direction of our propaganda, a

retreat was made upon the position that nothing so ugly could be natural, that our boots were hideous, and 'would never do.'

Scarcely less strong was the opposition we encountered when in mild weather on the Links and elsewhere near Musselburgh we discarded coats. The thing was reasonable in itself, no doubt, for why should a boy perspire to please his senior's eye? But the influence of elderly opinion upon social habit was much stronger then than now. Grave persons could not see why we should object to wear the same number of plies as themselves. They resented as a Bohemian liberty our innovation upon ordinary attire.

But we were already somewhat hardened against them by the success of our previous revolt against caps. The good sense of the young athletic public of to-day is most with us in regard to caps. The bicyclist of to-day, at least on country roads, takes off his cap, as soon as he finds it more comfortable to do so. The pedestrian is following his example. Even at golf, where, for some reason or another, the spirit of convention is stronger than at other games, the writer observed, on the occasion of a recent tournament at Muirfield, that many of the younger members of the club had abandoned this depilatory article of attire. But in the year 1870 and for many years afterwards coatlessness and caplessness were a reproach. It was a wild thing to discard the cap at golf. It was almost an outrage to remove the coat. The reader may laugh if he pleases, but we were witnesses in a cause, and our sufferings in support of it, particularly if we happened to be of a humble and sensitive turn of mind, were at times not inconsiderable. 'Where's your jacket, Bobbie?' asked Mr. Rutherford Clark of a Loretto boy one Monday morning on the Links. 'And why don't you wear a cap?' (Clark was himself in high silk hat and tail-coat, like Sir David Baird in the old print.) The boy replied with some attempt at tact, that he and his companions looked on the Links as their own place. 'Well,' replied the counsel, in the courteous, ironical vein which he adopted towards the sons of old friends, 'so long as you are kind enough to let us use them too, I suppose we can't

object.' But few people had Clark's charming way, and if our young friend met other members of the Honourable Company that morning, we may be pretty sure that some of them were annoyed at his rejection of ordinary garments. It was just another of 'that man Almond's fykes,' one would remark. 'You could never tell what maggot would get into that brain.' And then he would make an angry drive, and, topping the ball, roll gently into 'Pandy' (let us say), and be rebuked by Willie Park for 'pressin',' or by Crawford for 'takin' a cricket swing.' But the golfers were not alone in their objection to our novelties of dress and undress. We had to run the gauntlet of a general censure. Old gentlemen living in Musselburgh in the later 'sixties' were surprised at first, and at last a good deal disappointed that we did not meet our deaths from our insane practice of running capless and coatless round Falside in wild weather. Witty farmers of the county proposed to get up a subscription to buy us hats. Even the hardy fishwives of the coast, as they passed us on their way home from country rounds, had a motherly word of warning for us. 'Pit on your bonnet, my lamb!' they would say, 'pit on your bonnet! Ye'll catch an awfu' cauld.'

The notion that fresh air gives cold was, at the period of 1870, as widely diffused in Scotland as it still is in many parts of the Continent. Doctors in large practice descanted upon the folly of braving the subtle malaria which the chill night air inflicted on the sleeper. The beds of grown-up persons of the upper class were then always fenced with curtains. On cold nights the curtains were usually drawn. There were 'box-beds' in the cottages of the poor—beds, that is to say, enclosed on three sides as in a cupboard, and furnished on the fourth side with shutters, which might also be closed. Night-caps were beginning to go out, but the heads of all older persons were still protected by them. Even by day the most careful precautions were taken. In winter sturdy boys were in many cases compelled to wear comforters. Children, even in summer, were often forbidden to take off their coats at play. In rough weather it was held wise to keep indoors. Few even active men shared our

conviction that there is not a day of a British winter when open-air exercise cannot profitably be taken. In the treatment of illness the coddling system practically held the field. Indications of phthisis were the signal for closing every window and door-space with hermetic zeal. The vitiated atmosphere which Almond was already preaching as the cause of the disease was still regarded as inseparable from its cure.

The morbid opinions which prevailed in physical matters produced their worst effect in the case of the gentler sex. Many men admired delicate women. For this reason, and in consequence of the general valetudinarian sentiment, a large number of women *enjoyed* delicate health. Most young ladies had neuralgia. Most middle-aged ones suffered from 'nerves.' The nervous feeling might come on at any period of the day. It puzzled us Loretto boys completely, when we observed it in friends of the family during the holidays. It yielded, as a rule, to smelling-salts, or sherry, or *sal volatile*. At girls' schools, as Herbert Spencer complains in his famous work on *Education*, republished in 1870, 'play' was usually forbidden as unladylike. The 'crocodile,' pursuing its sinuous and melancholy course, mostly along streets, for one hour daily, furnished almost the only form of exercise. A large proportion of school-girls were crooked. The backboard was a common article of furniture in schools. A very few girls of home nurture rode horses. But the accomplishment was by many considered 'fast' and unfeminine. Readers of the *Noctes* will remember how North and Tickler, no prudish critics, express their disapproval of ladies' riding. The prejudice to some extent survived. Croquet in summer and, very occasionally—this also was a recent innovation—skating in winter were almost the only forms of amusing exercise permitted to most girls.

For men of the upper class in 1870 physical conditions were by no means so bad; but they were much worse in the northern than in the southern portion of the realm. In all European communities the life of the country gentleman is favourable to the cultivation of the robuster virtues. It

has been so to a special degree in England, where every squire is a hunter or a shot, a racer of horses, or, at least, a cricketer. In England, also, the influence of the country squire has ever been great, and the country parson has commonly been a friend, if not a relative, of the country squire. The hall and the vicarage have worked well together, and their combined weight has always been cast in favour of bodily vigour and a manly life.

Nowhere has their influence been more effective than in the case of the great English public schools. Before the appearance of Arnold these institutions were completely dominated by the spirit of the country parson and the squire. Nor was Arnold, himself a Winchester boy, at feud with this temper so far as the body and its virtues were concerned. The Christianity which he introduced contained no touch of mawkishness. He left the English public schools even manlier than he found them.

The character of the English public school boy has impressed itself upon the English university. Oxford and Cambridge have not always been nurseries of the intellectual virtues. They have always been champions of the physical virtues. If they have left something to be desired in the way of subtlety and sympathy and enlightenment, they have never failed to hold up to the nation an ideal of physical vigour, and an example of the manly life.

In Scotland, at this date of 1870, a number of causes had conspired to produce a totally different complexion of affairs. The Scottish lairds, no less than their English brethren, stood for manliness; but they had much less influence with their fellow-countrymen than was exercised upon Englishmen by the English squires. They had never, as a class, supported the revolutionary settlement of religion in Scotland. They agreed in general with Charles II that Presbyterianism was not a gentlemanly form. The squire had often a son in the orders of the English Church. It was a rare thing for the son of a Scottish laird to join the ministry of any Presbyterian body. The baldness and rudeness of Presbyterian worship repelled him. The democratic ideas upon which the system was founded

were naturally distasteful to members of his class. As intercourse between the two portions of the island increased with the development of railways, the influence of the Church of England made itself more and more felt among the Scottish lairds. A good many of them were hereditary adherents of the Scottish Episcopal Church. From the middle years of the late Queen's reign a considerable number began to build themselves Episcopal chapels. The Scottish Episcopal Church of recent years has made a great gain among the poorer classes of the towns. But, in country districts in the year 1870, it was mostly the gentleman's Church. The farmer and the villager went to the parish kirk, or its offshoot. The country gentleman attended the 'laird's chaipel.' Even when, for lack of other provision, he put in an appearance at the parish kirk, he went there more as a critic than a worshipper. He was seldom an elder. He was rarely a devoted member. He did not throw himself heartily into the interest of the national Church, as in the corresponding case his brother did in England. He was not hand in glove with the parish minister as, in England, the parson was hand in glove with the squire.

This religious difference between the laird and his humbler fellow-countrymen was, in its more recent development, the result, in some measure, of a previous political strife. In the troubled years preceding the Reform Act of 1832 the lairds had put themselves in violent opposition to a determined national movement. Popular indignation was loud against them and their ideas. Even Sir Walter Scott, among other things a typical Border laird, was hissed in the capital of his sheriffdom. The passage of the Bill deprived them of much of their remaining power. Disraeli's Act of 1867 and the popular movement which followed it completed the process of destruction. Nor was it only that their political power was shattered. Their ideas of every kind passed under a cloud. John Bright and the Manchester school triumphed over them. Mr. Boag and his disciples divided their spoil. In the Scotland of 1870 physical vigour and the manly virtues were much

less esteemed than now. For this result the political ruin of the lairds and the general eclipse of their influence were responsible in no small degree.

But the character of the Scottish universities was a powerful contributory cause. With the introduction of the new regulations with regard to entrance and studies which dates from the year 1892, these universities underwent a radical change. To consider the nature of this change is beside our present purpose. Our remarks have reference to the unreformed universities, the universities of 1870 and previous years. Unlike their English sisters, the Scottish universities had never represented the notions of an upper class. No doubt they were frequently used by members of such a class, but they were not designed for them. It was their special glory that they had studied the ideals and met the needs of the less privileged orders of society. The 'lad o' pairts' in the Scottish humbler class is gifted with an imagination scarcely known to his English brother. Upon his noble passion for learning, upon his less noble but still natural and legitimate ambition to rise, the Scottish universities had founded their system. Theirs had been a popular and democratic work, whose fruit had appeared, not in the polished excellence of a few great scholars, nor in the enlarged outlook of a few great statesmen, nor even in the general diffusion of the virtues of these eminent types among members of an upper class, but in the vigour of a society continually replenished from beneath, in the intelligent careers of Scotsmen of humble origin in every part of the world.

But these high qualities, at the date we are considering, were balanced by defects as grave; and it is upon these defects that the course of our argument requires us for a moment to dwell. The bookish intensity of the poor Scottish student, his burning ambition, had engendered in the universities which catered for him a corresponding narrowness of aim. Religious education was, for the most part, left to look after itself. No one had ever heard of a Scottish university being made the centre of a religious propaganda as the English universities had so often been.

Social education languished. Even now, when so much has been done by the foundation of unions and otherwise, it is remarked that the genuine Scottish student is too often an 'unclubbable man.' Physical education, and it is this that chiefly concerns us here, had been almost wholly neglected. It was not until 1875 that the Principal of Edinburgh University appealed to the public to provide, by bazaar and subscription, the modest sum of £1500, which was needed to meet the preliminary expenses of renting a field of ten acres for the physical exercises of a body of upwards of two thousand students. In Glasgow a recreation park of three acres was included in the ground-plan of the new University buildings, erected in 1870 upon Gilmour Hill. But even so lately as 1902, Almond's aid was invoked, along with that of Sir William Ramsay, to prevent its being in part occupied by science class-rooms, in accordance with a building scheme warmly advocated by the Principal himself, and supported apparently by a majority of the University Court. A splendid gymnasium was opened for the Glasgow students in 1872. The exertions of Professor George Ramsay and others succeeded in raising for this object no less a sum than £22,000. In 1870, then, the date which we have chosen for our review, lovers of health in the chief Scottish universities were maturing the courage of their convictions. But they were still in a small minority. However Sir Alexander Grant and Professor George Ramsay, with their Oxford notions, might put themselves at the head of the first athletic movement in their universities, the main sense of the governing bodies of these universities was as yet indifferent to considerations of health. The opinion of the Scottish professor in this matter was often in glaring contrast with the attitude of the Oxford and Cambridge don. The river and the cricket field were educational agencies to the latter. To the former they were too often mischievous distractions, or, at best, childish amusements. Nor was this difference of opinion accidental. It was inherent in the nature of either system. The English universities met the requirements of a physically vigorous, if somewhat barbarian, upper class. The

Scottish universities represented, in the main, the ideas of the poor student—noble and valuable ideas in the intellectual sphere, as I shall have occasion to remark in a later chapter, but on the physical side grievously defective. Even now it cannot be said that the Universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow are nurseries of healthy habit. On the contrary, they are places where the ordinary student has no little difficulty in maintaining his health. Conditions are specially bad in the medical faculties, where for the majority of the students an overloaded curriculum necessitates an unwholesome life, and where, by an odd irony, an almost complete indifference to the physical depletion of the student appears to prevail. Even in faculties which are not specially devoted to the study of the art of health, the practice of that art is less habitual than at Oxford and Cambridge. In spite of all that has been done (in Edinburgh more particularly, by the purchase in 1896 of the excellent University field at Craiglockhart), the habits of the Scottish student are too often sedentary, and inimical to the due recognition of physical claims. So far as the Scottish universities knew anything of us and our early movement, they were sure to disregard it. It was not from them, at this date of 1870, that we of Loretto could expect any support in our crusade in favour of healthy habit and the manly life.

In the case of the schools the neglect of physical claims was scarcely less marked, but its effects were somewhat mitigated by the irrepressible energy of Scottish boys. Sir Walter Scott, in one of those delightful reminiscences with which he beguiled the regrets of old age, mentions the continual fighting which maintained the physical vigour of the bolder spirits in the Edinburgh High School of his youth. ‘Bickers,’ or stone-fights with the ‘caddies,’ were, also, not uncommon. At one of these combats, he tells us, a hanger was produced, and the bright locks of ‘Green Breeks,’ a champion of the popular party, dabbled in blood. There were occasional encounters with the Town Guard, in those days an ancient and decrepit force. Reckless youths climbed about the Castle Rock, adventuring even the

perilous pass known as 'The Kittle Nine Stanes.' They roamed the country-side with their companions more easily than their successors of to-day. Edinburgh was then less than a third of its present size. Egress to the open fields was more readily effected than now.

In 1824, just forty-one years after Scott had concluded his brief attendance at the High School, the Edinburgh Academy was founded. Its history in the physical sphere affords an interesting picture of the transition from the lawless and unregulated energy which the poet describes for us to the more civilised activities of a modern school. Fighting still supplied at 'the new Academy,' as it was called, a rude outlet for the manly virtues, but it was pursued with less ferocity than of old. The combats with the 'keelies' of Stockbridge, which still excite romantic memories in the breasts of a few surviving Academy boys, were mild affairs contrasted with the 'bickers' of which Scott speaks. Manners were becoming softer. In the school as in the nation, the war spirit was beginning to decay. For the first time in the history of Scottish education a game starts into prominence in the Academy yards, and that game is not cricket or football but hails. Our interest in sports is no less keen than that of a Homer or a Virgil, but of the picturesque game of hails we have not leisure now to speak. It has not held its own with its more scientific rivals, and it is probable that, even from the beginning of the school, the two greater games were not unknown. Football, indeed, was forbidden in the yards, but, strange to say, cricket, nay, even cricket-matches were played in them. The Academy boys played matches also on the Meadows. Lord Moncreiff talks of getting up early on Saturday mornings about the year 1852 to secure good pitches there. In the yards, again, fives was played up against the ashlar walls of the school. It is astonishing how much use the boys made of those two acres of open ground which the directors had wisely secured for them. But as the sports pursued there and elsewhere were entirely voluntary, and the opportunities of prosecuting them so restricted, it is probable that a large number of the boys

held aloof. A further deduction from the value of the physical training received at the school must be made on the score of the early age of leaving. Even so late as 1850 it can scarcely have been higher on an average than fifteen years.

From the beginning of the Academy the attitude of the masters towards boyish athletics was not unkindly. It was much more sympathetic than the relation at the same period of university professors to student sport. While it was childish for men, it was considered natural for boys to play. But though they tolerated the physical exercises of their pupils, the school authorities, until 1850 or later, did nothing to encourage or regulate them. The bodily claim had not yet taken rank with the intellectual claim. The boys might 'play' if they pleased. The dominie's concern was with their 'work.' In adopting this estimate of his responsibilities, the schoolmaster was in full agreement with the parent. He was in full agreement, also, with the distinguished men who had founded the Academy. To them a school was a place of learning, and of intellectual preparation for success in the strife of wits that was to follow. In its essential character it was nothing more.*

About the middle of the century we may trace the dawning of a larger ideal. English views of education and English modes of sport begin to modify the narrowness of Scottish conceptions. In 1853 Dr. Hannah, an Englishman and Rector of the Academy at the time, formed the project of securing a field for the school. He summoned the Academical Club and the secretary of the Grange Club to his assistance. The necessary steps were taken, and, in the spring of 1854, the Academy field at Raeburn Place was inaugurated, which was for so many years the centre of Scottish athletics. The opening of this field was the occasion for an outburst of enthusiasm for manliness among present and former pupils of the school, and indeed among the more active section of the youth of Edinburgh generally.

* The reader may refer, in confirmation of this view, to the report of Sir Walter Scott's interesting speech at the opening of the Academy in 1824.—Lockhart's *Life*, vol. v. pp. 361-5.

Football matches at Raeburn Place began to attract public notice about 1860. Interscholastic Games, as already mentioned, were instituted there in 1866. The present wide diffusion of Rugby football in Scotland dates from the playing of the first match between England and Scotland there in 1869.

But the opposition which the movement encountered in the year of 1870, to which the last-mentioned date has almost conducted us, was much more fierce and general than can easily be imagined now. Mr. Boag and his school condemned all athletics as tending to divert the mind of youth from the proper study of a man, to wit, the discharge of business functions. Many doctors denounced the more violent forms of them as perilous to life and limb. The laird's voice, which would naturally have been raised in support of them, was drowned, as we have seen. Ministers of religion, for the most part, discouraged them as conducing to frivolity and the formation of a brutal type of character. Evangelicalism was still the dominant cult in Scotland—an Evangelicalism which had not yet concluded its alliance with the muscular Christian's creed. 'The Joiner' was quite revolutionary in 1875, when he insisted on playing cricket with the younger members of his mining congregation at Canonbie. The session were scandalised. They could not reconcile such conduct with their idea of what a minister should be. In this case, indeed, there were special reasons why these prejudices should be overborne. When the splendour of 'The Joiner's' drives, and the deadly swiftness of his bowling had produced a marked revival of religion in the parish, even the stiffest of the elders gave way. But though they admitted the game, they could not approve the Bohemian costume in which it was played. 'I've nae objection to the cricket, Mr. Barclay,' said one of them, 'but for pity's sake dinna wear thon uniform!'

The wave of sedentary commercialism and mawkish religionism which reached a climax in the year of the Great Exhibition had not found in the schools, or universities, or landed gentry of Scotland the forces which controlled it

in England. Tennyson's protest in *Maud* awaked the sympathies of a great party in England. In Scotland it fell upon preoccupied ears. The business man, if he had read the poem, sneered at it, as he cashed his cheques. The devout man shook his head at it, as he made arrangements (let us say) for a public religious meeting, at which laymen, successively uprising, should deliver their sentiments upon the subject of love (Christian love, be it understood !) for a period each of five minutes.* To-day, the athletic ideas of the laird and of the upper class with which he is allied have infected the Scottish *bourgeoisie*. At the period which we have been considering, the sentiments of the Scottish *bourgeoisie* had overborne the opinions of the laird.†

The Scotland in which Almond began his forty years' battle for health and hardiness and reasonable physical habit was a very different country from the Scotland of to-day. The change effected during the period referred to has been very great, but so gradual that we are in danger of forgetting that there has been any change at all. It is difficult for young athletic Scotsmen of to-day to believe that there ever was a time when their countrymen of the upper class shuddered at the thought of sleeping with open windows ; when they considered closed windows a safeguard of health and a remedy for disease ; when they prophesied rheumatism for the youth who took a cold tub in the morning, and bronchitis for the boy who faced the beating of the storm ; when they were astonished at boots the shape of a foot ; when they were annoyed that a runner should go capless on a country road, and scandalised that a player should take off his coat on a golf links ; when large numbers of them considered that athletic exercise of any kind was a childish pastime for men, and even for boys a frivolous and useless occupation. Yet these opinions, which seem so absurd to young Scotland

* The writer was actually present at such a meeting in Perth in the autumn of 1866.

† Few things illustrate so clearly the change that has come over public sentiment in regard to these matters as the fact that in the year 1859 old Dr. Sanderson had to take out an interdict in the Court of Session to prevent the representatives of the Town Council of Musselburgh from feuing the Links.

at the present hour, were dominant opinions in the Scotland of 1870. They were not easy to dislodge. For many years it seemed that they would never be dislodged at all. Now they have vanished, or are fast vanishing, and to this result Almond has contributed more than any other man. It is not pretended that he was the sole champion of the ideas which have replaced them. There were many other workers in the same field. But most of these workers, as we shall point out in detail in a later chapter, were colleagues or pupils whom he had inspired, or friends who had adopted a system of his devising. He was the leader and master of those who, in Scotland more especially, have prepared the wiser temper, the better practice, which now obtains. He was the pioneer of health ideas for the Scotsmen of his time. Elsewhere it is proposed to consider the true significance and scope of his labours in this department. It is enough in this chapter if we have shown the reader that there was a warfare for him to wage. The national life of the period we have been reviewing was very different from the national life of to-day. In the regions to which his quest conducted him, he found it a prey to monsters more destructive than many which infest it still. Against these dismal creatures he did valiant battle. After long years of effort he at length prevailed against them. Some few of them he at last succeeded in stretching, stomach upwards, on the sand.

CHAPTER X

DALKEITH CHAPEL—‘OLD RODGER’—EARLY CHOIR PERFORMANCES—THE HEAD’S BIBLE LESSONS—THE ‘CAPTAIN’ LEAVES

MENTION was made of the new religion which the Head discovered for us, and there is danger that the separate treatment which it was necessary to give to that body of doctrine should produce the impression that we were deprived of the usual means of grace. As this was far from being so, it is proposed in the present chapter to give an account of the more ordinary religious life of the place, beginning with the first day of the week, which was always at Loretto a very individual day.

The morning, indeed, until the year 1875, when we began to have services of our own, was for most of us a somewhat cheerless time. We attended St. Peter’s Episcopal Church, which stands just opposite Loretto garden-gate, sitting there behind Sir Archie Hope, and Colonel Aitchison, and other gentry of the neighbourhood. The Scottish Episcopal clergyman has made great advances since that day. He had not then learnt how to ‘run a service.’ The ministrations often seemed intolerably long. It was not so bad for those boys who sat in the old lady’s pew. If they had colds, or coughed as if they had, she passed down lozenges, remedies which, as might have been expected, increased the evil they were designed to cure. Very occasionally we climbed the hill to the ‘Visible Kirk,’ where Mr. Beveridge not unworthily occupied Dr. Carlyle’s chair. Mr. Beveridge was a man of wide and liberal culture, as was, at that date, particularly shown by his interest in music. He was one of the first Presbyterian ministers in Scotland to put an organ in his church. As an officiating pastor, he had a dignified aspect,

a resonant voice, and a noble gift of oratory. In the simplicity of the Presbyterian worship of those days there was often something singularly affecting. It is difficult to imagine anything more impressive than the solemnity with which Mr. Beveridge used to give out the opening words of the service: 'Let us worship God.'

But, in general, it was the afternoon of Sunday that redeemed the day for us. Even as small boys we enjoyed it immensely, although sometimes, in long spells of dry weather, we tired of the walking part, and were glad enough to turn back at sudden showers. Nay, I have even known us, in such cases, stand, dripping-wise, under leaky rones in Newbigging to make sure that the process of wetting was complete. For Dalkeith Chapel, which the kindness of the Duke of Buccleuch permitted us to attend, was four miles off; and, even if we started a full hour before three o'clock, which was the time when Evensong usually began, and took the shortest route, which lay through the smells and fish-heads of Newbigging, up Inveresk Hill by the Old Kirk Road between the high walls, along the sandy river path, past the unsavoury Cowpits, and so through the Park—the little five-minutes bell often surprised us at the Duke's stables. On such occasions we had to run all the way through the wood, and sometimes, if the bell showed signs of stopping (as chapel bells have a way of doing at such anxious moments), to take the short cut up the steep bank on which the building stands, concealing ourselves as much as possible behind the lime-trees from a certain venerable gaze. For if the Duke was at the Palace, as he usually was at Christmas and Easter time, he was sure to be passing just at that moment along the little gravelled pathway which led to his own private entrance.

St. Mary's Chapel of Dalkeith was at that time one of the few places in Scotland where the gracious Episcopal form of service was suitably enshrined, and perhaps the only place where the classic English chants and anthems were tastefully rendered. Modern music, singing like some wandering southern minstrel to an imprisoned king, had not long begun to make its voice heard under the bleak skies of the northern

realm; and here, in this guarded precinct of Dalkeith, Purcell, Tallis, Battishill, and the other English masters of the chaste cathedral school were, so to say, like nightingales, betrayed by some warm spell of south wind across the Border, where their sweet notes fell strangely on unaccustomed ears, for the Calvinist and the Precentor were then in the land. To us Scottish boys, who had never heard anything of the kind before, these services were quite a revelation.

Mr. Bushby, the permanent chaplain, was a fine example of the good old English parson of those days. He had a cheery, ruddy, clean-shaven face, with a long, mobile upper lip, and little brown eyes that twinkled merrily when they looked at you. The collarless coat, dog collar, and wide-awake of the modern clergyman were not then in vogue. Old Bushby substituted for these articles a silk hat and a long frock-coat, with a high limp collar and white choker. Over those of us who were Episcopalians he exercised a kind of nominal charge at the time of our confirmation, but, in the matter of the Catechism, was not difficult to satisfy. He preached genial, practical sermons, but did not insist on delivering two of them every Sunday. There was a touch of special sympathy in his manner, as of one who makes a kindly concession, when, in hot summer weather, he gave out the welcome announcement: 'There will be no sa-amon this afternoon.' He and Almond were fast friends, and the parson's little brown eyes danced, and his long upper lip twitched with fun and good-humour, when he met him. There was a strong religious bond between them, as the Head was very regular in all his church duties, attending chapel twice every Sunday, and partaking of the communion always with much earnestness, as often as that sacrament was dispensed. To some of us boys, also, the Dalkeith communions were a devout experience. In the tranquil, unforced English way St. Mary's was a centre of true religious life.

This deeper bond of friendship with Bushby was, in Almond's case, cemented by a lighter one. The chaplain was an enthusiastic angler. Even in the Esk itself, which

at that time had been converted into a drain for the paper-makers, he was in due season to make proof of his skill. Not long after the purifying scheme was supposed to be in operation he sallied forth, and succeeded in catching a trout, or sea-trout, of about a pound in weight. This prize, so the story went, he reserved for the Duke's table. But alas! the cleansing process had not gone far enough. The poor trout proved uneatable. It smelt of paper-mills.

Of the congregation which gathered at the chapel the Duke himself interested us most. He was a spare, neatly built man, of average height, and always beautifully dressed in light trousers and a broadcloth frock-coat. His collar, like Bushby's, was high and limp, and he wore a light-coloured cravat wound twice round it, and tied in a bow in front. A huge boss on his forehead, the result of some bony growth, marred the profile of a well-cut face, but did not in the least interfere with the air of dignity and refinement which characterised him indescribably.

Lord Melville, then in extreme old age, was a frequent worshipper at the chapel. He had been an unusually tall man, and still retained a very soldierly air, although bent with years and rheumatism. His silk choker and his dress in general was black, and he wore a black velvet collar to his coat. He had fear-inspiring eyes, and the sanguine, half-purple complexion so common in Raeburn's portraits of old lairds and noblemen of the preceding generation. We understood he had been a terrible fire-eater in his youth.

Very different was the aspect of the Marquess of Lothian, who, at certain times of the year, came over every Sunday from Newbattle. A delicate man, with a melancholy, soulful face, which by us who sat behind him was usually seen in profile. He wore a beard, which at that time gave him a somewhat foreign air.

Perhaps I noticed these interesting people more than many of my companions, because, from the time when I was about fourteen years old, the Head often made me one of the little party of boys and guests who attended

the morning service. Both for religious and other reasons this was a privilege much esteemed. At the Cross Keys Hotel, whither an adjournment was made for luncheon, we found excellent chops, and, as a rule, 'Old Rodger,' whom we voted the best fun of the week. John Fleming Rodger, Solicitor before the Supreme Courts, was the Head's lawyer; and, in that capacity, as was well known in Edinburgh, a mine of legal learning and worldly sense. In literature his interests lay chiefly in the eighteenth century, as might be guessed from the style of his humour, which, in spite of the Head's abating influence, had, at times, a Smollettian touch. His den in Edinburgh, as an advocate told me who had penetrated thither, was so piled and littered with old books and manuscripts that a visitor could scarcely find a sofa-corner to sit down upon. There was little he had not read. But it was his passion for church music that brought him to St. Mary's Sunday after Sunday in spite of heat and frost, dragging his unwieldy body the dull seven miles from Edinburgh. It was an old habit with him to devote the Sunday to exercise and harmony. In his youth, when pence were scant and his lodging lay somewhere in the north of England, he had walked, he told us, some portentous distance weekly to enjoy the services at Durham Cathedral. Here at Dalkeith he betook himself to the organ-loft, where he was welcomed by Hewlett, the brilliant little English organist of those days. In their love for church music and their contempt for church ordinances, they were a well-matched pair. Rodger was in the habit of describing Hewlett as a 'godless little devil,' and he himself paid but little attention to the more devotional and hortatory parts of the service, reverting at such times to his literary pursuits, and having even, it was said, a novel backed like a prayer-book, which he read up there in his quiet corner, the whimsical old heathen, until it was time to listen to the anthem or the closing voluntary. Yet once, under I know not what religious impulse, he stayed to communion, and partook, so the Head told us, with much reverence. He rallied me afterwards for not having stayed myself that morning, but when I gave him

the reason whatever it was, commended me, in his humorous way, on the proverbial ground that it was not good to be 'righteous overmuch': there was danger of 'destroying oneself' that way. But whether he was pointing a moral or adorning an anecdote, it was always a delight to us boys to hear old Rodger talk, his ogreish eyes beaming through his gold spectacles in the kindest fashion, and his rude Silenus face mantled in joviality, as he sipped his whisky and lemonade at the inn fireside, and flung out, mostly in answer to the Head's sallies, droll epigram, racy repartee, wise comment, compassionate criticism, jests which, but for our presence, would have been very broad indeed—all the stores, in fact, of his rich Rabelaisian humanity. For beneath the outer coarseness of the man there lay a deep vein of tenderness, and poetry, and reverence for what is truly venerable, and this was always gleaming to the surface in the passing of the baser metal.

On fine days we returned to the Park after lunch, and wandered down the lime-walk to the arbour that overlooks the South Esk, where Rodger would smoke a cigar and the Head a pipe, as they continued their conversation, and we listened or joined in. Or if the family were not at home, we sometimes strolled across the edge of the cricket-ground (for Dalkeith Club played then on the flat meadow in front of the Palace) as far as the bridge, and watched the multitudinous hares chasing each other among the laurels and cypresses on the lawns below. It was a great boon that the late Duke bestowed upon us of Loretto when he gave us the run of this beautiful domain. Almond used often to speak of it, referring to the present Duke, who to himself extended special privileges, as the most generous of men, and declaring that, in his opinion, he got more pleasure out of the Park than the Duke himself.

At evening service the rest of the School joined us. Thereafter Rodger trudged back to Edinburgh, and we set off homewards through the Park. Except in the few weeks of midwinter darkness, it was a pleasant walk, but especially in spring, or early summer, when the innumerable armies of the rooks were winging their way to the high

woods beyond the river, and the herds of fallow-deer, more lively than at other seasons, raced in ever-widening circles across the road as we ran to intercept them, the last of them sometimes clearing it with springs of thirty feet. What delightful times one sometimes had with the 'Captain' on these evening walks! The Head, too, was always at his best then, talking with boundless vivacity of the beauty of the anthem just sung, of the importance of setting long fields to save two and not one and a half, of Gladstone's last move, of the modern over-estimate of literary genius. With regard to all which interesting topics we delivered our youthful opinions with the utmost freedom, for this was what he liked.

One day in quite an early year our discussion was rudely interrupted. We were approaching the railway bridge that crosses the Esk about a mile above Musselburgh, when a couple of navvies, mad with doctored whisky, reeled out of the gathering dusk and attacked us. One of the two was a monster of strength. We boys were not big enough to render much assistance. Things began to look unpleasant. To our surprise, the Head assailed the largest of the pair with a shower of taunts and blows. The giant replied with random buffets, one of which knocked off our Master's silk hat into the hedge. It was a furious fight, but the Head brought it to a finish at the end of the first round. He delivered a terrible kick upon the shin of his antagonist, who spun off howling into the darkness. The Head was never a slave to rules.

After tea on Sundays was a delightful leisure time. We read, chatted, and wrote letters in winter, and in summer lay upon the mound, or strolled about the garden, in the peaceful, unherded manner elsewhere described. There were School prayers in hall at nine o'clock, and at eight o'clock we gathered to practise the anthem, and the psalms and hymns, under the direction of Mr. Heathcote, the tenor soloist from Dalkeith Chapel. Heathcote was at that time a charming singer, and, as a teacher, had but one fault: he spared himself too little.

Even in quite early days the musical material he had

to work upon was reasonably good. Every now and then a soloist appeared among the trebles or altos. Tomlinson and Bill White were lights among the basses. The 'Captain,' also, sung bass occasionally; but when the anthem was of Handel's composition, more often added to the general volume of tone by playing the top-line upon the violin. The Head himself had a fine tenor voice for chorus work, but, like many inexperienced choristers, found it difficult both to count and sing, or indeed to count without singing, for the bars of rest in fugues caused him much embarrassment. As he had boundless courage in attack, this weakness sometimes produced disaster. 'Goldie' took no part in the music, but criticised the sentiment of the hymns. Mr. Burrow had a little respite at these hours. 'Jinks' was reading Hebrew in his rooms in Musselburgh, or smoking, it may be, a certain redolent clay-pipe, which was his solace in lighter moments.

'Oncers' of to-day will be surprised to learn that we took the greatest interest in these practices and the following service. But we were very inexperienced singers, and at times the effect of our performance was more humorous than devotional, as may be seen in the following passage, which is taken from a paper in the *Memories*:—

'Once more the picture changes. There is no chapel yet, but we take much trouble with our choir. Sunday evening prayers in hall supplies the great function of the week. To-night Handel's Hallelujah Chorus is the anthem. But everything goes wrong. The "Captain's" strident fiddle seems to be playing tunes of its own. The altos make a mess of several important entries. Heathcote sings each part in succession, but cannot keep us right. Worst of all—or do I assign to one evening the incidents of several?—during that perilous pause which precedes the final Hallelujah the Head himself comes out with a stentorian "Ha!" Tomlinson, by some accident, has not been with us that night, but has listened to our performance from without. "Well," says the Head to him, as he leaves the hall, "I'm afraid we did not make much of the Hallelujah Chorus to-night." "No, you did not, sir,"

replies the candid Tomlinson. "It sounded as though you were flinging Hallelujahs at each other's ears."

But bright and wholesome as was the spirit of these Sunday evening services, and elevating as were the influences of St. Mary's Chapel, it was at week-day evening prayers that we received our deepest religious impressions. The Head always took them himself in those years, and devoted about twenty minutes nightly to a brilliant and original exposition of selected portions of the Bible. In Holy Week, which, owing to the shortness of spring holidays then, was usually passed at School, the lessons took on a deeper tone. Evening by evening, the Head went over with us the events of each day, so that, when Good Friday came, we were all worked up to an extraordinary height of pitying interest and fervour. Good Friday itself was observed with much solemnity. On that day alone of all the days of the year we wore black ties. At the long service which was held in hall our Master painted for us, with all the vivid force of genius, the storm of human wickedness and terror that raged around that one calm figure, and then the final scene. It was a wonderful imaginative effort. We seemed to be eye-witnesses of that stupendous tragedy, and to follow the Roman soldiers and the jeering rabble to the place of execution. For the finer spirits the strain may perhaps have been too great, and so the Head seems himself to have thought it, as about 1874 he disused this special observance of Holy Week, and on Good Friday sent us over to Dalkeith instead.

To the week-day Bible lessons there was no such possible objection. They were of enchaining interest and power, and communicated to all the more thoughtful portion of the School the essential message of the Bible, as the Head conceived it. He put questions to us from time to time after the manner of his own masters, Ramsay and Buchanan, and, in spite of the Scottish shyness, there was usually some boy who could rap out a bright answer. As may be imagined from what has already been stated, he set much store by those passages which emphasise the need of intellectual freedom and unconventionality of mind. The idolatry of

the Hebrews, copying the ways of the corrupt nations among whom they dwelt, instead of remaining true to their own peculiar code; the routine spirit of the Pharisees, making God's commandment of none effect by their tradition; the protestant ardour of the prophets of the old covenant; the revolutionary fervour of the Founder of the new—these were as frequent themes of his teaching as they represented the characteristic mould of his thought. For then as always to the Head the first duty of every vigorous and serious mind was to clear itself of time-honoured preconceptions, to have done with worldly conformities, to lay firm hold of the best knowledge in every field, to base conduct always upon reason.

Here, it will be observed, he was at work upon the bases of that new religion which has been described on an earlier page. But his insistence on humanity in relations was no less marked. The sentences in the Gospel which deal with the duties of friendship and forgiveness furnished the subject of many an utterance in which his unique knowledge of boy-life and rare sympathy with boy-nature found happy expression. 'First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift'—he would not have us harbour resentment. 'Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him'—he taught us the courage of true friendship. Many will remember, also, the touching way in which he would dwell on the noble passages in the Old Law which enjoin the deeds of mercy. 'Thou shalt not oppress a stranger, for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.' This was a text upon which he would often found in recommending to us that pity for the helpless which lusty boyhood is so slow to learn. He was unusually successful in all this teaching of loving-kindness. He had fully learnt the lesson of it himself. It was just here, on the side of frank and generous ardour and compassion, that the main strength of his own character lay. We could not but catch something of the spirit of it. Our society was leavened by that large humanity. At a time when gross bullying was still a common feature of life at many schools, it formed no part of our traditions at

Loretto. Black looks and scowling brows were seldom seen there. The temper of the place was at all times singularly sweet and kindly. If there be a cantankerous Lorettonian, I have yet to meet him.

About the year 1874 the growing numbers of the School could no longer find accommodation at St. Mary's Chapel. It became necessary to institute a separate service for us. It was held at first in a hall in Musselburgh, and took the place of St. Mary's Evensong and of our own Sunday Evening Prayers. The serious tone of the more thoughtful portion of the School, and the heartiness and willingness of the general life of the place, ensured the success of this first Loretto service. As singers, also, we were growing much more experienced now. About a year before, Mr. Charles Guild had been appointed music master at Loretto. He was a pupil of Sir George Martin, now organist of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, but, during the time of Guild's tutelage, choir-master of St. Mary's, Dalkeith, in succession to Mr. Hewlett, whose promising career had been cut short by typhoid fever. Guild was a capital trainer of a choir. It was under his direction that we adopted the important principle of giving fully as many hours—in the case of the trebles and altos about twice as many hours—to separate practices of the parts as to combined rehearsal. In this way nobody's time was lost, and a wonderful amount of music was got through. In the spring of 1874 we gave a performance of a considerable part of the Messiah in the 'Visible Kirk,' where the new organ proved of great assistance. There was a large attendance. Old Rodger himself came down from Edinburgh to hear us. 'He would be a harsh critic,' he said, as he walked back with some of us to the School, 'who should be otherwise than pleased.' This gave us musical rank. If Rodger was pleased, it mattered little who else found fault.

But we were not long to enjoy that genial presence. Rodger came down to the School a few weeks afterwards to see the Head about some matter of business. I noticed that he was unusually silent, and expressed the hope that he was not unwell. He replied that he was suffering from

toothache, and added, after a pause, and with an air of deeper resignation than the occasion seemed to demand, that he had no reason to complain : he had not had a day's illness for thirty years. It is probable that he had already received an intimation from some doctor of the serious condition of his heart. His was one of those strong constitutions which break but will not bend. He was dead within a week.

On much more of this early Loretto life the curtain was soon to rush down. 'Jinks' had left in 1869, having been appointed colleague to the United Presbyterian minister at Kinghorn. Here he laboured with much fidelity until the year 1874, when the town was attacked by typhoid fever. In his eagerness to help his suffering people our old master wore out a frame already weakened by overstudy, took the disease himself, and died. His was not a dry-eyed funeral. 'Goldie,' as has already been mentioned, left us in 1871 to take the post of modern language master at Fettes College. Mr. Burrow remained until 1878, but in that year departed, to find, as it proved, a larger sphere of work in England. The 'Captain' left in 1875. Two years before, a great misfortune had befallen him. Brutus had died, and our master's grief for the loss of this humble companion seemed to some of us beyond measure great. I was laid up at the time with a touch of illness, and the 'Captain' came to the 'Sanctum' to sympathise with me. Soon he began about his own trouble. In student days at St. Andrews, or perhaps even earlier, he had fallen in love with a Fifeshire girl. But the narrowness of his fortunes—a schoolmaster with no degree, and scarcely enough money for his own occasions—appeared to render his suit hopeless. Yet for some time they continued to see each other in the name of their old friendship. Brutus had been her gift to him in one of these sad, happy years, and so long as the dog lived, the 'Captain' had something to remind him of his attachment. Now Brutus was dead, and the sense of his irreparable loss in the past and sombre outlook for the future seemed almost more than he could bear. What does a boy know of these miseries? I

comforted him as well as I could. But the incident quite threw our poor friend off his balance. His temper became ungovernable, and led to trouble both with boys and masters. A careless way he had fallen into of running bills at shops now added much to his embarrassments. At last he betook himself to the standing solace of assistants who have missed their mark—he began abusing the Headmaster. The work of his classes was suspended, while he raved by the hour about ‘that man Almond’ and his misdeeds. He became impossible, in fact, and had to leave.

Let us finish his story now. This act of our drama is closing in some sadness. In the next I shall cheer you with the sound of wedding-bells. In the spring of 1875 the ‘Captain’ sailed for New Zealand to take up school-work there. For a number of years he did well enough. But, as time passed, and the educational system of the colony became more organised, his lack of a degree told heavily against him; nor was it his only disability. He tried to find some other means of livelihood than teaching. We heard of his having built himself a house somewhere in the wilds, and of his maintaining himself there by casual employment. But the experiment did not answer well. Once or twice money was raised among his friends and pupils, and sent out to him. But these subventions never set him on his feet again. Some men seem fated to go under. He died in the colony in much poverty in 1899.

The other day I came across a book of Ascott Hope’s which he had given me as a prize in 1869. On the fly-leaf, in his beautiful handwriting, alluding to our common labours on the *Æneid*, he had inscribed the verse: ‘Forsan et haec olim meminisse juvabit.’ ‘One day you may remember this hard work of ours with pleasure.’ But, as it turns out, the pleasure is a very mournful one. Alas! Poor ‘Captain!’ May the soft New Zealand turf lie gently on that passionate heart!

CHAPTER XI

THE HEAD'S MARRIAGE—THE FIRST CHAPEL AND ITS SERVICES—COLIN MACKENZIE, W.S.—LORETTO BECOMES FAMOUS IN ATHLETICS—VARIOUS EVENTS

ON the 29th of April 1876, in St. Mary Le Bow Church, Durham, the Head was married to Miss Eleanora Frances Tristram. The lady was the third daughter of his first cousin, elsewhere mentioned, Canon Tristram of Durham. It was thus, so to speak, a marriage within the family. Henry Bond Bowlby, afterwards Bishop of Coventry, uncle of the bride, was the officiating clergyman. Mr. William J. Laidlay, the well-known painter, last also of the 'pewters,' was best man. The wedding was less formal than most weddings of that date. When the Head was called upon for a speech, he evaded the difficulty. 'I have already made a speech,' he said, 'which I believe to be the best and wisest I ever made.' This was graceful, and, as it happened, very true.

The proposal had taken place in the Galilee Chapel at Durham Cathedral, not far from the tomb of the Venerable Bede. A few days before, the Head had told Mr. Laidlay, who was then practising at the Scottish Bar, of the nature of the errand that took him southward. He now sent Mr. Laidlay a telegram: 'Accepted and approved.' It may illustrate the closeness of the relations which always subsisted between Almond and his head-boy that he had already communicated to me the object of his journey, and informed me of his fears and hopes. At the time of the marriage the Head was forty-three years of age, and the bride no more than twenty. But even during the last years the vigour and freshness of our Master's mind made one forget the difference of age.

The growing fortunes of the School had by this time placed the Head in easy circumstances. Half-a-dozen years before, in 1870, the numbers had sunk as low as thirty-nine. In that year, the desire to have in Scotland a rich and powerful school of the English type had resulted in the establishment of Fettes College, and for the moment it seemed probable to most observers that the new foundation would crush its poorer rivals. The Head was of a different opinion. From the first he declared that the institution of the College was likely to popularise boarding-school education in Scotland, and would thus assist him. And so indeed it proved. From the time of the opening of the new school the fortunes of Loretto began to mend. As they improved, the Head's reputation as an expert in boy management advanced. An increasing section of the public were beginning to recognise that they had among them, at work in this despised profession, a man of exceptional power. 'Almond, if I had twenty sons,' cried an enthusiastic parent about this time, 'you should have them all.'

Proof of the growing opinion was supplied by the intimation, which was conveyed to him in 1873, that he might have the Wardenship of Glenalmond without a contest. The proposal was not without its temptations. The excellent buildings of Trinity College, the charm of its position in one of the loveliest regions of Perthshire, the special character, also, of its social connection, furnished strong recommendations. Perhaps even a greater inducement was to be found in the likelihood of escaping finally from financial difficulties which, although much lightened, were at this time not yet finally dispelled. It was the dread of a governing body that decided him to decline the offer. The recognised function of Boards in British education (which is, no doubt, to weaken the hands and embarrass the undertakings of such headmasters as happen to have ideas upon the subject) was by no means to his mind. If anything could have reconciled him to try the venture, it would have been the character of this particular Board, of which perhaps the most influential member was the Duke of Buccleuch, who had already shown him so much personal kindness, and who, within the next

few years, with a generosity altogether rare in the history of Scottish education, was to come forward to assist the College in a period of temporary depression. Yet even so he 'feared the Greeks,' and preferred the liberty and uncertainty of Loretto to what he surmised would prove the gilded bondage of Glenalmond.

The history of Loretto during the next few years appeared to justify his resolution. The numbers of the School rose steadily. In 1876, the year of his marriage, they were eighty-eight. In 1878 they had advanced to a hundred. In 1882 they had risen above a hundred and twenty. At this level they remained, with wonderfully little variation, for a period of almost twenty years.

The Head received an important wedding-gift from the old boys on the occasion of his marriage. A chapel was presented to the School. It was built of iron, and in order to prevent its becoming overheated in summer, the Head devised various arrangements in sail-cloth for increasing the draught from the windows. The site chosen, namely, the little triangle of neglected ground beyond the mill-lead, was more conducive to amusement than amenity. The approaches lacked the seemliness to which worshippers are used. The pig-sties and the stable-midden were too visible on the left, and on the right a huge raft, which figured on the coast in summer, remained stranded during half the year. Heaps of various litter—old water-butts, decayed wheelbarrows, disused garden implements—lined the scrubby bushes that overlooked the lead. That ancient flood itself, with its dead cats, old newspapers, and other refuse, was as unsightly to the eye as it was at times unpleasant to the nose. Almond could never be persuaded to take any interest in such trifles, and indeed the visitor himself forgot them, so soon as he entered that pleasant little pine-walled chapel and saw the bright, attentive faces of the boys, seated quietly in their places, as the Head and the masters filed in.

There are few sights so calculated to strike a chill to the heart of the observant visitor as the uprising of an ordinary English public school congregation. The total absence of colour in trousers, waistcoat, or necktie, the all-

prevailing, Puritanic, regulation black, produces an impression of gloom from which the spirits do not easily recover. The temperament of boys is sensitive to such influences, and it is probable that this perverted taste for dulness has much to do with the languor that characterises so many public school services. But here the effect was very different. In dress, as in everything else, the Head hated lugubriousness. 'Do you think that the ministers of the gospel of joy will continue to swelter in black in the millennium?' he inquired of a clerical pupil. And when asked in his turn how he would have parsons dress, he replied, 'Like the apostles in stained-glass windows.' He had the strongest objection to what he terms 'the dull, dingy, unpicturesque get-up of the ordinary school, never smart, and never free.' 'Either be entirely practical in your costume,' he would say, 'and admit no principle but science; or if you must have a conventional parade dress, let it be something fine, and worth making a sacrifice for.' From the earliest days of the School, therefore, we adopted Eton attire for Sundays and state occasions, and our Master's taste for bright colours added to the costume an early Victorian touch which has since become classic at Loretto. Trousers were always light, ties red and white, or lavender. Gloves, which were insisted on, were also light in colour and material. In spring and summer most boys wore white waistcoats, and every boy, at all times of year, had a buttonhole from the Headmaster's borders or conservatories. With this handsome dress the bright complexions of the boys themselves were much in keeping, as indeed was the nature and spirit of the service which brought them together.

A picked choir, singing delicately to a listless congregation who mumble the responses, was to the Head the ideal of what a service ought not to be. At Loretto two-thirds of the School were in the choir, and as of the remaining third there were always some who were only temporarily absent as having broken their voices, it may be reckoned that, at one time or other, three-quarters of the full number of the boys took part in the musical portion of the

service. The psalms were sung to Anglican chants, and were specially chosen, not always from the psalms of the day. The 104th, the 105th, and the 118th were particular favourites. Unison singing was much employed to lend force to the stronger verses. When a more refined effect was desired, the trebles often sang alone. In general, the greatest attention was paid to clearness of articulation, and variety of expression. The singer who was too careless to study his marks was always getting into trouble in the Loretto choir. Hymns were of the robust type, and were interspersed with Scottish metrical psalms, such as the old 124th, 'I to the hills will lift mine eyes,' sung to French, 'God is our refuge and our strength,' 'The Lord's my shepherd,' and others; or with paraphrases, such as 'O God of Bethel,' or 'How bright these glorious spirits shine!' Hymns expressive of unreal and mawkish sentiment were carefully avoided. No Loretto boy ever admitted that he was 'weary of earth,' or that he 'craved for rest.' The canticles were sung to compositions by Stanford, Parry, and others, but the crown of the service from the musical point of view was, of course, the anthem. The range and standard of the works performed under this head were altogether exceptional in the history of school singing. 'I have on a list,' writes Mr. Cliffe, now organist of Haileybury School, 'no less than eighty-three anthems alone, the greater number of which were done once a year. Handel is represented by a goodly number of important choruses and anthems; Purcell, by "O sing unto the Lord," "Thy word is a lantern," "Rejoice in the Lord alway," "O God, Thou art my God"; Boyce, by "O where shall wisdom be found"; Greene, by "God is our hope and strength," etc.; Battishill, by "Call to remembrance"; Goss, by "O praise the Lord of heaven," "Praise the Lord," "The wilderness," "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun"; and so on. Other writers—Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Spohr, Wesley, Mendelssohn, Croft, Attwood ("They that go down to the sea"), etc.—are well represented too. It was the Head's belief that the daily practice and weekly performance of such music as this, year after year, is a much more satisfactory

arrangement than the preparation of a "work" for concert or other function. Boys got to know the pieces better, for by the time they left School they had sung, at one time or another, perhaps three different parts. There was quite enough criticism abroad to act as a weekly stimulus, and no special occasion was necessary as the object of the work. The choir had no special rewards, for the Head strongly objected to privileges. There was no choir-half, no remission of work, no high-supper or other meal. "It is mere bribery," he said, "and if they don't consider it a privilege to take part in this music now, their reward will come later." But they did consider it a high privilege, as indeed was at all times evident to visitors who attended these delightful services.

At the opening of this 'Tin Chapel,' as it was called, the Head had had thoughts of putting all the boys into surplices. 'My dear Hely!' the old lady had remonstrated from beyond the tea-cosy, 'only consider the washing!' It was decided upon reflection not to conceal the brightness of the boys' dress under the bushel of a surplice; but the masters were dignified with this garment, as also with their Oxford or Cambridge hoods. The service, thus embellished to the eye, and recommended to the ear, was considered 'very High Church' in the days of which I write. But this reputation did not long abide with it.

On the 20th of February 1877, the Head's first child, George Hely Hutchinson, the 'Geo' of the letters, was born at Loretto. In announcing the event to the School the Head remarked that he was glad it was not one of 'those stupid things called girls'—an ungallant opinion which he learned to modify when girls actually arrived. Of these the first was Christiana Georgiana, who was born at Loretto, December 19, 1878. A few weeks before 'Geo's' birth, rain and wind and tide, conspiring to flood the Esk, had laid the park under water. It was to this unusual event that Colin Mackenzie alluded when he sent the Head the following verses in celebration of the birth:—

'Jam nova progenies coelo demittitur alto,
Assiduosque reget patria virtute pupillos.'

In ancient days, they say, Deucalion's flood
Engendered Python from primeval mud :
'Tis no long time since flooded Esk did pour
His seething waters through Loretto's door.

Say, what new monsters bred the ebbing tide
In Almond's home, now partially redried?
Some coughs, catarrhs, and colds its offspring are,
And, last, in Almond's halls, a son and heir.

Erst, while the chosen race the desert trod,
The almonds budded upon Aaron's rod :
Behold the day of miracles again !
An Almond blossom buds on Almond's cane.

God bless the lad ! And what a boy 'twill be !
Grandson to Tristram ! Almond, son to thee !
In each new freak, and fyke, and fidget skilled ;
Sweated by racing, or by snowstorm chilled ;

In football trained to break, quite free from qualms,
Indifferent which, his own or others' arms ;
To hack, to fight, perhaps to read and scan ;
At least to take his lickings like a man.

To this and more I see the lad aspire,
Spurred by his ardent but unreasoning sire ;
Yet to his mother look, and draw from thence,
To salt the whole, one grain of common-sense.

Colin Mackenzie, Writer to the Signet, and senior partner of the firm of Mackenzie and Black, was a close friend of the Head's, and much about the School in those days. Few men were better known in Edinburgh, or presented a more characteristic appearance. A high, bald forehead, fringed with curly brown hair, surmounted, in his case, a clean-shaved, ruddy, plethoric countenance, lit with a pair of laughing blue eyes. If 'old Rodger's' physiognomy told of whisky toddy and Rabelaisian jests bandied across the punch-bowl, Colin's spoke of good claret, and delicate quips, and finely crusted tales, circulating with the family decanters. For he was a man of good old county stock, his father having been a cadet of the Portmore house. He had a short neck, and a pair of very high shoulders, which he hitched a great deal in walking. He may have some-

times come out without a greatcoat, but we never saw him without one. He was at this time scarcely more than forty years of age, but looked some ten years older. He had been educated at Glenalmond, but certain influences had prejudiced him against the marked Episcopal temper of the School. A strong revulsion had ensued. He was never tired of inveighing against what he called 'high-canting Episcopalianism,' not sparing even the Duke of Buccleuch in his diatribes, and deploring, as we have seen with too much reason, the unfortunate political results which had followed the religious separation between laird and cottager. But he was no less severe upon the greater schism of the Free Church, and in this case, also, was fond of unmasking the cant which at times he thought that he detected within the fold of that pioneer communion. A correspondence of his with a certain Free Church layman was often referred to with amusement among his friends. His adversary, by way of answer to one of his letters, had sent a sheet of paper containing the single reference: 'Proverbs xxvi. 4.'* Colin's reply began somewhat as follows:—

'SIR,—I have often heard that the Devil can quote Scripture, but was unaware till now that a Free Church Elder could so aptly imitate his Master——'

'I think that will do,' he said, as he showed the letter to a friend before posting.

He was himself a strong Established Churchman, of the Church and King stamp better known in England, and attended St. Andrew's with much regularity. In politics he was a high Tory, abhorring the cant of Liberalism as much as other cants. Unlike most members of his class in Edinburgh, he was full of public spirit in civic affairs, and, entering the Town Council along with Mr. James Mansfield, a former Loretto boy and pupil of the Head's, was mainly instrumental in defeating the costly and injudicious proposal for bringing water to the city from St. Mary's Loch. His literary taste, which ran much to Horace and the *belles lettres*, was considerable, and the verses which he

* Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him.

was always knocking off upon occasion needed nothing but the labour of the file to give them a high rank among such compositions. This finish, however, he was too busy to bestow upon them, for he was much immersed in affairs. Like many old Bachelors he delighted in the society of boys, and his ideas of them and of school life generally were much the same as those to which Thackeray has given such admirable expression in the pages of *Dr. Birch and his Young Friends*. In particular, he had all the novelist's pleasure in tipping. I shall never forget the delighted grimace with which, on a certain occasion, he received my own look of joyful surprise, as he squeezed a pound note into my hand at parting, or the merry peals of laughter he uttered thereafter, as he hurried away down the 'Woody Walk,' his shoulders hitching mightily, and the tails of his greatcoat flapping behind him as he went. As may be gathered from the poem which has been quoted above, he was always laughing at the Head, and his 'insane notions'—a liberty which our Master never resented in any of his friends. Every new idea, he used to say, is first laughed at, then opposed, and then accepted. Upon several questions Colin made proof of all three stages in the course of their too brief acquaintance. Of this, indeed, he had some inkling himself. 'Either I am modifying my opinions, Almond,' he once said rather abruptly, 'or you are becoming less of a lunatic.'

In April 1878 the Head went to live at Linkfield House. Here his third child, Henry Tristram, was born, and here, on the 7th of February 1882, old Mrs. Almond died in the eighty-eighth year of her age. The Head was threatened with serious illness in the preceding month, and was ordered by Dr. Heron Watson to leave at once, if he would avoid complete break-down. When Mrs. Almond communicated this to the old lady, 'He won't go quite yet?' she said quickly; and then, after a pause, 'What did the doctor say?' 'The sooner the better,' was the reply. A silence fell, which the old lady broke by saying: 'Tell him to go at once—to-morrow.' So the next day the Head went up to take a last farewell of his mother. After seeing him off,

Mrs. Almond returned to the sick-room. 'I shall never see my dear boy again in this world,' said the old lady. 'But I did not let him see that I knew it,' and a few tears fell softly on the dear old cheeks. Three weeks afterwards she passed away.

The Head was much blamed by some for thus leaving his mother in her last days, and for not attending her funeral. The plea of grave illness was scarcely sufficient in this latter case to justify his absence. He had a horror of death, as affecting those he tenderly loved, and of funeral rites, and it was this that he was unable to bring his overwrought nerves to face. Some change of constitution, the result of long overwork, occurred at this time, which rendered him, for the remainder of his life, unable to endure those strains which men of tougher fibre and less imaginative temperament support without difficulty. The following letter, written from Loch Inver to his wife a few days after the funeral, explains the position :—

'I don't know what to say. I feel the blank worse and worse every day. Expected as it was, I hardly believe it yet. She had been like a part of myself all my life. How fortunate I did not get leave to come, and then come and find her gone! I don't think I could have got over it. I suppose I am strangely constituted; but, if I had been there, I would have inclined to run away. I could just endure it alone, but the ceremony and service, etc., would, I believe, have given me brain fever. For some one I cared less for I might go through it, but where one's love is intense—I couldn't face it. How people ever hit on such ways of intensifying the intolerable is past my belief. Oh! but I would like to have been with her to the end, or before it. Every hour of her I have missed seems taken out of my life.

'Well, I needn't dwell on it, and, darling, it all makes me love you all so much more. I never felt I gave you love enough while she lived. I don't believe any one in love ever loved so madly as I loved her. It was different, of course, but I suppose such strength of union between parent and child as there was between her and me, is rare. At least I think so.'

The nervous overstrain which this letter indicates was a new experience for the Head. It was only within the few preceding years that he had known what it was to be tired. Once established, however, the condition did not easily yield. He had been at work, with but little relief, since 1862, and the long struggle, scarcely heeded at the time, to build up the School, had gradually worn him down. He complained of loss of memory ; of an inability to act, which, in persons of a decided temper, is one of the worst signs of exhaustion ; of a continued whirl of thought which rendered sleep impossible, and, at times, only ceased 'when the salmon was actually on.' He had a longing for that 'complete Nirvana,' which is most difficult for a Headmaster to come by in these days of telegraphs. 'How delightful,' he cries, 'to be a cow up to its knees in water, or ——' (an unspeculative golfing friend) 'at St. Andrews, and have neither ideas nor individual problems !' Gradually the rest of the Highlands restored him. But from this time forward he adopted a special kind of life. Sharing his responsibilities with a vicergerent (Mr. H. W. Mackenzie in 1883, Mr. Cotes from that date till 1885, thereafter Mr. M'Lachlan till 1892, and from 1892, Mr. Tristram), he was absent from the School during the latter halves of both the Spring and Summer Terms. He adopted, also, a siesta in the afternoon as part of his daily habits.

In April 1884 the Head bought North Esk Lodge. It is a good house with pleasant lawns and a large garden, and stands at the end of the Iron Bridge on the Fisherrow side of the river. His home was henceforth here, and here his remaining children were born—Eleanora Mary on the 9th of November 1884, Roland Latimer on the 12th of January 1886, and Charlotte Katherine Jocelyn on the 30th of September 1892. Here also his sister, Miss Ellen Almond, came to live with him in 1888. For some years she had been residing in Mill Hill, but, as her age and infirmities increased, the Head thought it better that she should join him. The flitting was to take place on a certain afternoon, but long before the time appointed poor old Miss Almond was in such a state of joyous excitement that it was judged

wiser to bring her over at once. 'He setteth the solitary in families,' she cried, as she entered the friendly house. So keen a pleasure is it to the old and childless to abandon their solitary way of life, and share in the vivid interests of a young household! It is to this Miss Almond that we are indebted for the diary which supplies the greater part of the material forming the first chapter of this work. It is rarely indeed that the childhood of a remarkable man has found so keen and sympathetic an observer.

On the 24th of November 1886 William Scott Forman, usually known at Loretto as 'Bilshky,' died on board the P. and O. s.s. *Verona*. He had been much overwrought as a magistrate in Sind, having been for some time at work alternate weeks at Hyderabad and Kurachee, and was now returning to India from holiday at Singapore. The intolerable heat of the voyage tempted him to take a cold bath, which brought on an attack of dysentery from the effects of which he never rallied. When he was nearing his end one of the passengers leaned over him, and asked how he was. 'Oh, I'm all right,' replied 'Bilshky,' and almost immediately expired. His death was a great loss to the Head, and to all the survivors of the earliest Loretto days.

It is time that I should return to the history of the School. About the year 1873 a few Loretto boys made their appearance at Oxford. In 1878 some of them got into the Oxford Rugby Football Fifteen. In 1880 five of them had their Rugby Football Blues at Oxford. One of these was also a member of the University Cricket Eleven. Perhaps the summit of athletic distinction at Oxford was reached in 1881, when of nine Lorettonian undergraduates eight had played for Oxford at Rugby football, all of whom ultimately got their Blues. Of these, also, one was captain of the University Cricket Eleven, and another president of the University Boat Club. But three years later, in 1884, the results were scarcely less remarkable. The twelve old Loretto boys had among them eleven full Blues, and no less than seven of their number played for the University in the Rugby football match against Cambridge. On the running path, also, they were almost as distinguished as on the football

field. Nor was this athletic eminence at the English universities a thing of a few years only. Until the end of the century the School had seldom less than three men playing football for one or other of them. Of football captaincies, also, the Loretto share has been large. During the years 1884-1891 no less than four Lorettonians held the office of Rugby football captain at Oxford, and in the year 1900 the Rugby football captains both at Oxford and Cambridge were Loretto boys.

This athletic distinction had a marked effect upon the reputation of the School. However little persons of a sedentary temper may like it, the British public is interested in athletic prowess. The renown of Clifton College in its earlier years was due quite as much to the fact that a member of the Tylecote family made 404 runs at cricket on the close as to the admirable arrangements of Dr. Percival. The thoughtful writings of Dr. Thring did scarcely more for the fame of Uppingham than was effected by the little group of celebrated cricketers who appeared there about the year 1875. Nor should we quarrel too much with this rough assignment of honours. Athletic eminence, as St. Paul recognises in a well-known passage, is never won save as the reward of many virtues, and the public is seldom far wrong in arguing from the appearance of one set of excellences in a community to the existence of others. High athletic distinction in a school is almost invariably the sign that that school is in a condition of general health and vigour. It is commonly associated with distinguished intellectual success. It has been often remarked at the universities that the college that does well on the river succeeds also in the schools.

This reasoning was certainly borne out in the case of the little band of undergraduates who first made fame for Loretto at the English universities. Of the handful of athletic members of the School who were up in 1880 two had First-Classes in Natural Science. Of the nine Lorettonian undergraduates at Oxford in 1881 three were scholars of their colleges.

Thoughtful observers were even more impressed by the

individuality of the Loretto type of character. In addition to the special virtues of the athlete, courage, endurance, energy, presence of mind, they remarked in it a certain breezy kindliness and vigour of public spirit which brought Loretto men naturally to the front in college life. In most of them, also, there was a further note of simplicity and innocence of nature. It was to this characteristic, no doubt, that a well-known writer in the *World* referred when, in an article on the University Cricket Match of 1883, he spoke of the 'blameless Hyperboreans of Loretto.' Oddly enough, they had taken on little of their Master's revolutionary temper. It was one thing for a boy to defy usage when he was one of a number at Loretto and following Almond's lead. It was a different thing, for most an impossible thing, to embark upon a similar quest alone.

To Almond the sudden and scarcely expected success of his pupils in English athletics came as a great encouragement. He regarded it as affording to the general public and to the Loretto boys themselves a rough demonstration of the value of the methods of physical culture which he had introduced into the School. It was in this spirit that he had written some years before to a friend who had blamed him for showing excessive interest in the results of matches. 'As for the collective success of the School,' he said, 'it is natural that I should be keen. It is natural that I should desire to prove by results the soundness of the system of physical training I am trying to work out. How else but by success against larger numbers could I teach boys to believe that many things which are irksome to them at the time are tending to turn them out into the world stronger, more active, and more high-spirited men than they would otherwise be?' The Spartan manners of Loretto had made great demands upon the boys. In himself also they had required for their establishment much firmness and persistence. He was now to reap the results of these painful efforts, and was in a position to point assured morals with confidence.

In 1880 the School entered into further relations with English athletics by the arrangement of an annual cricket

match with Rossall. So far the results of the meeting have been wonderfully even. In 1883 the Loretto Eleven took a run southward and defeated the Uppingham School Eleven. Uppingham cricket was no longer in its palmiest days, but the result was interesting, as showing the general level of Loretto cricket. In 1889 an annual football match was arranged with Sedbergh. In this encounter Loretto has had rather the best of matters.

On the 5th of October 1881 the Fettesian-Lorettonian Club was formed. Ever since the foundation of Fettes College in 1870 the Schools had been pleasantly associated. In several cases these agreeable relations had been cemented by university friendships. Almond's intimacy with Dr. Potts and several members of his staff, notably with Mr. C. C. Cotterill, had been mutually prized. From about 1874 the annual matches at cricket and football had been regarded by both sets of boys as the principal athletic events of the year. The size of the Schools, again, rendered it impossible for either institution to form a powerful Old Boys' Club alone. In combination, however, it was probable that they could take rank with the Old Boys' Clubs of any Scottish or English School. The Club has always shown a keen interest in the general welfare of the parent Schools, but exists primarily for athletic objects and for the purposes of the reunions which are held from time to time. The annual cricket and football tours, in which the Fettesian-Lorettonians have encountered the strongest English teams, have been attended with marked success, and have done much to spread the knowledge and fame of either School. It was only in quite an early year that a note in the *Manchester Guardian* explained that the Football Fifteen playing that day in the city was composed not of Messrs. Fettes' and Loretto's present boys but of their former pupils.

In January 1881 Mr. Frank Adams, previously Sixth Form master, assumed the post of second master at Loretto. The rapid rise in the numbers of the School during recent years had greatly increased the Headmaster's burdens. Loretto was by no means a large School, but it was a very big family, and Almond's personal way of managing affairs,

and the extent and intimacy of his correspondence with parents, old boys, and friends, had for some time rendered devolution necessary. The long strain of building up the School, moreover, was at length beginning to tell upon his nerves.

The part of his duties for which he was least fitted by temperament and opinion was the supervision of the lesson-work of the boys. With the modern system of intellectual education, as will be more fully explained in a later chapter, he was utterly out of sympathy. The spirit of the competitive examination and the influence of the money prize seemed to him fatal to all generous ideas of culture. The kind of study which the system enforces, and the temper which it engenders in the student were alike odious to him. His attitude to the intellectual routine of the School, therefore, dominated, as it necessarily was, by such a temper, was in great measure one of antagonism. He admitted that such work must be arranged for, that, under present conditions, there was no possibility of striking out a new line; but he found it impossible to sink his objections to the nature of the study so far as to be heartily interested in it. His endeavours to inspire it with vigour and enthusiasm were obviously lacking in conviction. However reasonable, and even useful in certain points of view, such a position might be, it hampered him grievously in his discharge of what has usually been considered the chief part of a headmaster's duties. As an organiser, again, Almond had no great gift. The multitude of petty arrangements which fill up so much of a headmaster's day teased and fatigued him. Like many men of bold and original disposition, he was somewhat deficient in method. The perfect headmaster should combine the moral ardour of a hero with the business faculty of a Bradshaw. In the former endowment Almond was fairly well found. It was in the latter requisite that the defect of his qualities lay.

It was just here that Mr. Adams was strong. He had an unusual gift of order. His schemes were rapidly produced and always ran smoothly. School fires are commonly full of a prodigious number of irons. Mr. Adams had that

power of timely supervision which secures that each shall be kept always at the proper temperature. Nor had he fallen a victim to the narrowness of outlook and the officialism of spirit which frequently goes along with such a faculty. With all that Loretto stood for in the moral sphere he was in entire sympathy. He was a vigorous supporter of Almond's physical system. On a general view he seemed exceptionally suited to give the School just what it required.

It is much to be regretted that so promising an experiment should have ended in utter failure. For the purposes of his organisation Mr. Adams had demanded freedom from interference in the intellectual department. In giving his consent to such a condition Almond had not sufficiently considered how far it would hamper his own liberty of action. Neither was disposed to make concessions which seemed to each fatal to the success of his work. They were unable to delimit their respective spheres. The situation became impossible. After a couple of terms Mr. Adams took the post of sub-warden at Glenalmond under Mr. Wilfrid Richmond, a former Loretto Master and Tutor of Keble College, Oxford, who had just been appointed Warden there. It was thus left to successive vicegerents, during the twenty years that followed, gradually to confer upon the School that detailed excellence of organisation and minute vigour of working which it seemed that Mr. Adams was about, once and for all, to secure for it in 1881.

On the 19th of June of this year the Head preached his first sermon to the School. It was the eve of the Queen's Accession, and the occasion suggested an imperial discourse. It was the Head's practice, as it was that of the famous Methodist orator, Whitfield, to preach the same sermon many times. At each new repetition, which occurred after a suitable interval of time, the discourse thus selected gained in richness of thought as well as in sequence and power of expression ; nor was it until the fifth or sixth recension that it assumed a more or less final shape. Most of the sermons afterwards published had had the benefit of this frequent rehearsal. The first effort, above referred to, was upon a favourite subject, and became generally known to the

Loretto congregation as 'The Waterloo Sermon.' It appeared in its final form in 'Christ the Protestant,' under the title of 'The Divine Government of Nations.' It was always followed by the singing of 'God save the Queen'—an innovation upon ordinary practice which was not approved by certain Liberal members of the staff. It was, however, upon another than this first occasion that the Head made the following reference to their objection in a letter to Canon Tristram: 'Some of the masters represented to me that they did not like "God save the Queen" sung in church. There are three ill-conditioned Rads here still. They are going. It was sung.'

During several years on either side of 1880 considerable additions were made to the School buildings. This was partly effected by purchase. Two houses, which were christened respectively 'The Garrison' and 'The Barracks,' were secured for the lodging of boys in the High Street of Musselburgh. Several houses were also bought in Linkfield, opposite the east gate of the School, one of them being devoted to the purposes of a sanatorium. There was also a good deal of new building upon the lands of Loretto itself. In the summer of 1876 the old house submitted to yet another addition in the shape of the tower. This was a large, square, flat-roofed, three-storied erection, containing a schoolroom on the ground-floor, and dormitories and bath-rooms above. It was introduced between the north and south gables of the old east front, the picturesque lines of which it completely defaced. It was one of the Head's defects as a practical manager of a school that he could never be persuaded to pay the least attention to considerations of architectural amenity. When a new erection was in prospect he would appear upon the ground along with a local builder with whom he was in the habit of concocting his schemes in this kind. 'I want it here,' he would say, as he moved backwards drawing a line in the gravel with the edge of his shoe. And there, in due season, the unlovely building was seen. This insensibility to the claims of art in the material surroundings of boy-life was, in part, perhaps the result of his evangelical upbringing—it is rarely that

persons of this way of thinking have much artistic perception—but it was partly also the expression of his revolt against the exaggerated attention so often paid to the elegance of such surroundings at the expense of more necessary provision for the lives of the boys themselves. When all has been said, we must not forget that, as Sydney Smith observes, people live inside their houses and not outside of them. The Head's buildings were always sufficient in cubic space, well lighted and comfortable—a praise which cannot often be accorded, more especially in the case of edifices of the date we are considering, to the architectural efforts of schools.

At the north-west corner of the orchard, the 'top of the Hundred,' as it was called, a beginning was made in the year 1877 with a group of new schoolrooms, which has since assumed considerable dimensions. The meeting of two garden walls suggested the selection of the site. The material used was brick. The schoolrooms are large, and, after the introduction of hot pipes in 1880, were, like the other teaching rooms of the School, sufficiently warmed.

A ludicrous incident occurred in connection with the completion of the tower. It was the last Sunday of the long holidays, and a few days before the reassembling of the School for the Autumn Term. As it happened, I was at Loretto that day, and it was proposed to walk over to Dalkeith for the afternoon service. The Head intended to take a bath before starting, but something occurred to make him change his mind. As we were returning in the evening along the river path already mentioned, Weaver met us, a cloud of evil tidings darkening his brow. 'Oh! Mr. Almond!' he cried, as soon as he came within earshot, 'what ever made you forget to turn off that there bath?' It was an instance of that absent-mindedness in our Master which was continually affording amusement to the School. In the present case, the misfortune was considerable. The plumber had omitted to put in an escape-pipe, and the bath, running merrily in our absence, had completely flooded the new building. It was necessary to delay for a week the return of a portion of the School.

As has been implied above, the Head's indifference to the

architectural surroundings of boyhood was balanced by his admiration for the pride and glory of youth itself. A feeble and puny race of boys, moving about listlessly among splendid buildings, was to him an ideal of decay. Even to the oblivion of other points of view, his attention was always concentrated upon the boy himself—his physical condition, his intellectual power and freedom, his moral worth and grit. This aspect of the Lorettonian temper was finely caught by Mr. Henry Johnstone, then a master at Loretto, in the following copy of verses, which appeared in the *Lorettonian* of December 1, 1883 :—

‘ROUGH INDEED, BUT A GOOD NURSE FOR BOYS.’

Here is my seat by the shore of the Firth in the breath of the breezes :
Over against me the sun chases the shadows in Fife.

Here, where is little to see that the eye of the traveller pleases,
I am contented to dwell, nursing the seed-time of life.

I am the mother of men : my sons are my jewels, my treasure.

Here do they learn to endure and ever obey.

Help ever to give and to take freehanded, not stinting by measure ;
Keeping a Law in their life, seeking a guide on their way ;

Never to lie nor to flinch, and never to trample the weaker—

These are the arts that I teach, this is the lesson they learn.

Good is the lore of the scholar, and good is the skill of the speaker—
Better the truth-loving heart nurtured the Truth to discern.

Gather'd from wood and from glen, wide moorland, and populous
borough,

Hither my children come, all of them welcome to me.

Here is their work and their play, to learn the great lesson of Thorough—
Ever to put forth strength, loiterers never to be.

These are my goodly stones, my carven beams, and my pillars,

Whether hereafter they be teachers, or fighters, or both ;

Merchants that reach o'er the seas, or far in the colonies tillers,
Taming the earth with their toil, conquerors, scorers of sloth.

Therefore I am not fair with sculpture, or loftily vaulted

Gate, or the dim, o'er-arched cloister, or banner-hung hall ;

These are my glory, my sons, in these shall my name be exalted,
Either in these to the sky lifted, or never at all.

There is, however, one new building at Loretto which

needs no apology, and that is the chapel. The little iron chapel beyond the mill-lead had from the first been insufficient for the needs of the School. It was felt that the Loretto services were worthy of a better shrine, and in February 1891 the project of constructing a new stone chapel was mooted and launched. The proposal was warmly taken up by the old boys. In June of the same year the building was actually begun. In the following year it was completed, and was formally handed over by the Headmaster to trustees for the behoof of the School at an inaugural service held on 31st of May 1893. The chapel is a handsome building, with graceful, lance-shaped windows, and a fine west front. It is constructed of Hailes stone, and is picturesquely situated at the west end of the orchard. It holds about three hundred persons. The architect was Mr. John Honeyman. Of recent years the interior has been enriched by carved oak seats and memorial panels from designs by Mr. R. S. Lorimer. A beautiful tinted relief by the same architect has been placed upon the north wall in commemoration of those Lorettonians who fell in the Boer war. The subscriptions, raised chiefly by old boys, for the chapel and its decorations and memorials amount to about £3500. That so small and youthful a body of *alumni* should have subscribed, for these objects alone, a sum so considerable is of happy augury for the future of our national education. Scottish schools have seldom aroused in the breasts of their old boys those generous emotions which loosen the purse-strings.

In 1892 the Head placed a good organ in the chapel. The numerous recitals which Mr. Cliffe gave upon it did much to develop the taste for instrumental music at the School. In the year 1895 there were as many as twenty-seven members of the band, being more than one in four of the upper School. There are from time to time humorous complaints in the *Lorettonian* of the misery inflicted on their companions by the constant practisings of these musicians, but some amends were, no doubt, made at those frequent Saturday evening entertainments which had by this time become a regular part of the School life. Not unfrequently at these

reunions dramatic performances took the place of concerts, but perhaps the most popular of all ways of passing the Saturday evening at Loretto was supplied by the characteristic institution known as 'Shirt-sleeves.' 'Shirt-sleeves' appear to have begun about the year 1882, and are thus referred to in a passage which I transcribe, with some slight alteration, from a February *Lorettonian* of that year :—

'While walking round by the Fourth Form class-room the other evening our ears were assailed by such sounds as are usually considered by those who are unfortunate enough to be on the outside, to be strongly indicative of Terpsichorean orgies going on within. There was no mistaking the tinkling of the piano, doing its utmost to evoke a light and airy dance tune, the shuffling of busy feet, the occasional burst of hilarity. Advancing to the open window, we look within. What a scene meets our gaze! There we see some two score of the *jeunesse dorée* of Loretto, engaged in threading the mazy dance—gyrating, convolving, involving, clutching, stamping, shuffling, pushing, colliding, fuming, and, to judge from an occasional exclamation of wrath, *horribile dictu*!—"hacking." In fact, as no doubt Mr. Micawber would have put it in one of his confidential gushes, indulging in a "hop." There they are, going at it in the most business-like manner—the short, the tall, the thick, the thin; the grave and reverend prefect cheek-by-jowl with the laughing Fourth Former, or the giggling "Nipper." How they seem to be enjoying it too! Here we see none of the stiff formality of the conventional ball-room. Jackets are conspicuous by their absence. Shirt-sleeves are rolled up. Collars are open at the throat. There is a freshness and freedom, too, in their remarks to one another, and in their criticisms on one another's performances that is altogether wanting in the assemblages of the gay world. What there takes the form of the whispered sneer is here the outspoken chaff. "I say, Tom," urges one youth, "just have a go with me!" "Not if I know it," retorts Tom with promptitude. "You can't do it, man; you'd go to sleep like a top after a turn or two, and want to lie down." Such remarks as "Now then, stupid, where are you coming to?" are flying about in all directions. We gaze and muse. Can this be Spartan? Can these Sparto-Lorettonians be——? Here rings out the warning bell, cutting short at once our musings and the dance.'

But all other 'Shirt-sleeves' veil their crests before the great open-air 'Shirt-sleeve' which takes place on the last Saturday evening of the Summer Terms. It is held by the

sun-dial in front of the mound, whither a piano is brought out and placed on the grass. The School are in cricketing costume. There are a number of old boys among the guests. The entertainment usually begins with a racing polka. Energy in the dance is characteristic of Loretto. Polkas and Schottisches are specially robust. It was in allusion to these efforts that a reporter in the *Lorettonian* once observed that it was needless to say 'there were some accidents, but that happily none of them were serious.' Schottisches are accompanied by loud yells after the Highland manner. The dances are interspersed with songs, which have often in their various styles been of a high order of merit. Mr. Dyce Paterson, the 'Fatterson' of other days, sometimes put in an appearance, and sung 'When other Lips,' or the Loretto song, with his accustomed finish. Mr. M'Lachlan was great with 'Do ye mind Lang Syne?' Mr. Fred Kitto's big bass was heard to advantage in 'Nancy Lee' or 'The Vikings.' Mr. H. F. Caldwell, whose genial presence added much to the charm of these gatherings, had always some new song, specially composed by himself for the occasion to the words of Mr. Tristram or another. Tomlinson was sure to be called upon for 'The Medley,' or 'The Fine Old English Cricketer.' There was usually some brilliant treble, or mellow baritone among the boys—some Caldicott, or Wordsworth, or Gedge, or Balfour to discourse good music. About the middle of the evening the Headmaster's wife gave away the athletic medals, won the previous spring. Towards the end the twilight was illuminated by a torch-light procession. Some day a Loretto painter, Mr. W. J. Laidlay or Mr. H. A. M. Smith it may be, will select the scene of these innocent revels for his brush—the singer uttering sweet notes to the white-flannelled crowd of boys by the piano whose faces reflect the gleam of the candles; or again, the glittering line of torches, the lights on the elm-trees of the mound, the moving figures of the dancers, the stars coming out above the orchard spaces.

But music and the dance are not the only 'hobbies' of Loretto boys. The taste for natural history has found a

special line of development during the last ten years in the keeping of pets. Of these there has been quite a menagerie at certain periods. Mice, jackdaws, thrushes, starlings, rabbits, hares, stock-doves, ferrets, pigeons, bantams, ducks, squirrels, and owls are mentioned in a note in the *Lorettonian* as among the animals being reared at one time on the premises. The health of these pets has not always been as secure as science would desire to make it, but since the introduction of the owls, of which there were at one period no fewer than four, the menagerie has possessed a certain principle of self-adjustment. Casualties go to the owls, and in proportion to the mortality of other favourites is the welfare of these omnivorous birds. Much pains has been taken to lessen the death-rate, which, in all seriousness, affords the chief objection to the keeping of pets by boys. These efforts have not always met with the success they deserved. Such unmerited failure would seem to have occurred in the case of a certain crow whom his master endeavoured to cure of a serious illness by means of a dose of brandy. The remedy only hastened the poor bird's decease, and the diversion of good spirits was very ill seen upon the Links. It is in the following terms that 'Sandy Cleek' is represented as expressing himself upon the subject in a July issue of the *Lorettonian* in 1894 :—

I'm wae to think that a lad at the Schule
Should show nae mair wit, an' be sic a fule.
I hae kenn'd the Schule saxty years an' mair,
An' the lads wha went there to get their lair;
An' I learned them to put, an' learned them to swing,
Whilk a'body kens is a usefu' thing;
An' carried their clubs, an' teed their ba's,
But I ne'er kenn'd ane to gie speerits to craws.
They wad gie me a saxpence to drink mysel',
An' blythe wad I take it, wushin' them well.
But the lads o' to-day are nae like the auld,
An' Maister Almond may like to be tauld,
Gin I had the rule o' sic wastefu' young whelps,
I'd ca' them a' in, an' gie them their skelps.
This is the opeenion o' a' the Links caddies,
Claverin' about the Loretto laddies,
Wha, instead o' playin' wi' club, cleek, and ba',
Waste guid speerits upon a black craw.

During the last ten years of Almond's life the range of his influence was continually increasing. A striking indication of this was given when the boys of Wanganui School, New Zealand, decided by a large majority to adopt Loretto ways. Few events gave the Head more pleasure than this Colonial adhesion, and the incident was welcomed in the *Lorettonian* of July the 6th, 1901, in an article which concluded in the following terms: 'Perhaps the celebrated prophecy of Macaulay will be practically realised, and the rationally clad New Zealander will some day stand (or cycle) on London Bridge, and behold with wonder the black-coated, starched, and sweltering Londoner, and possibly convert him to true civilisation, which is merely another name for perfect rationality, and freedom from prejudice and painful or injurious conventions.' For some years, also, there had been a marked increase in the proportion of English boys at the School. In October 1902 there were 63 English boys, 52 Scotch, and 17 Colonial, a change in relative numbers which the Head mentions in a letter with the characteristic comment: 'Good for manners, bad for football'; or again: 'Better manners, less grit.' He was puzzled to account for the falling off in Scottish boys. 'The parents must be afraid,' suggested one observer, 'of their acquiring an English accent.'

CHAPTER XII

HIGHLAND LIFE

LITTLE reference has as yet been made to Almond's Highland life, but, during the last twenty years of his Headmastership, so much of his time was spent in that part of the country, and his sojourns there were at all periods so characteristic, that some further mention should be made of it. As has already been stated, it was as a boy in Arran that he had learnt his taste for fishing, but early in the 'sixties' he made his way to Sutherland, and from that time onward was usually to be found in one or other of the angling resorts of that beautiful county, when Loretto did not claim him. At first he was much at Inchnadamph, where he enjoyed the genial hospitality of John Sutherland, who had the inn then. But from about the year 1870 his quarters were more and more at Loch Inver.

Geologically the mountains that surround Loch Inver are among the most interesting in Scotland. For solitary grandeur the scenery can hardly be surpassed. Until the year 1882, moreover, the district was the paradise of anglers. There were two salmon rivers within easy distance of the village, and excellent fishing in the bay. But the peculiar delight of the place, for all but inveterate salmon-fishers, was to be found in the number of trout-lochs which the region contained. As Mr. Lang mentions in an earlier chapter, there are three hundred lochs in the parish of Assynt, and of these about fifty must have been accessible from Loch Inver. Putting up one's rod in the morning and striking off in almost any direction, one came upon new lochs and ever new. A day's fishing there, in addition to the charms of the sport, had all the romance of a voyage of discovery. Loch Inver is still one of the best trouting

stations in Scotland, but this special attraction is gone. There are deer forests on the Suilvein and Quinaig sides, and many of the best lochs are barred. One can no longer roam over the heather at will from one lovely sheet of water to another.

A letter of Almond's to his mother gives us an idea of the wealth of fish which the region supplied:—

'MY DEAR MAMMY,—Joking apart, it's an uncommonly good day for us. It's far too wet for the scent to lie. How many would-be sportsmen are rubbing their noses flat on windows! This is my off day, so I may write nonsense, while Kirkaig is filling for to-morrow.

' . . . Geo was out seeing Daddy catching little fishes the other day. He is very keen to see big fishes caught. We have had in house at once salmon, trout, cod, eel, haddock, skate, mackerel, herring, flounder (a big one, 2 lbs.), gurnet. What an *embarras des richesses*! Mackerel, herring, and kippered haddie for breakfast, big flounder and mackerel for dinner! Tired of salmon. Isn't it galumptious?

'I do like my bothy. I was at Kirkaig yesterday from 9 A.M. 8 P.M. dined, cigar, tea; lay down in clothes about 10 P.M.; woke about 5 A.M., undressed. Breakfast about 10 A.M. That's life for you! I wish you was here, but you wouldn't care.'

The following letter to his wife contains an account of a fishing experience:—

'STRATHAN, LOCHINVER.

'4 A.M., July 30, 1891.

'DEAREST,—I went to bed at midnight, and slept less than four hours. I shall take an easy day.

'It was a fish. The excitement was worse than a Fettes match. It was in Fall Pool. He rose under my feet twice, second time he showed his length, quietly pouched my fly, and sailed down. I struck—and now for it. Of course I had no control. He sailed slowly about, and at last went up towards Fall. After about an hour or less he began to get groggy, and I had him wallowing about in the rough water near the landing-place. Once he sailed past, but John

. . . I believe, didn't see him then. . . . He wallowed slowly down in the clear water perpendicular—nearly five foot high, I think, and at last established himself under the rock on the far side, near the top, like a stranded ship. I had treble gut, and put on a very heavy strain, for he was resting. No power whatever! Pelted him with big stones, hit him—moved a yard, back again. At last, when he had been about forty minutes there, an extra strain brought him out. He came up again near the landing-place, but past it he would not come. At last he slowly sailed with a pendulum sort of action down my own side. John was hawing like one doited. I said, "Stop blethering! Do what I tell you! Up the rock! Get on ledge!" (you know it). "Take the rod! Hold hard!" So I gave him the rod, and got up myself on to that giddy ledge. Fish sulking in the very tail. At last down he moved into the next holie. Of course . . . a follow was impossible. It needs three active men, if possible, there; but monster came to top, clean done out. As a last resource, I took the tackle in my hand; and, nearer the ledge edge than I liked to be, towed him up like a log on the top. Got him safely into the pool and below me. When he saw me, one glance with his eye, one turn with his head, and—tableau.

'He was about three stone—had been on two hours and twenty minutes by John's watch. So I lost three hours of the best day I ever saw on Kirkaig for rises. I only had one of eight pounds and one of five pounds; but lots of the best pools unfished. I had begun at noon and was stopped 9.10 P.M. by the dark.

'I can get no more Kirkaig. It's taken. I'm glad. I'm surfeited. I don't think I could stand chance of another monster. But these four splendid days have done worlds for me. I felt new strength, and could have fished on for hours, and walked to and fro. But really they ought to make a way from pool to pool. You lose the big fish. I shall try and make Gordon see this. On Inver they have not a fish over ten pounds. Kirkaig is a deer forest to a grouse moor, compared with Inver. . . .—Your adoring but now again sleepy
HUB.'

Strathan, from which these letters are dated, is the cottage to which the Head withdrew from the inn at Loch Inver in 1877. It is a four-roomed crofter's dwelling, and stands by the roadside at the top of a steep bank, about a mile and a half from the village on the way to the Kirkaig. His manner of life here was very simple. The rafters showed in the upper rooms, as he had them purposely unceiled for the sake of greater air-space. The furniture was of plain, unvarnished deal, with perhaps a single wicker arm-chair. There was only one servant. Thus accommodated, the boys and friends he had to stay with him lived in what he described as a 'flannelly, shirt-sleevy, open-throaty style,' passing golden days in endless fishing excursions, regardless much of times and seasons. He himself had the salmon-fishing on the Kirkaig three days a week, but at other times read and wrote much. As life went on, it was more and more as affording some relief to the ceaseless ferment of his brain that he valued sport.

From time to time parties of his friends appeared at the inn, and among these perhaps the most welcome was that merry company, now alas! sadly diminished, which consisted of various members of the Alston family, of Captain Young, and Mr. Harvie-Brown. Young and Harvie-Brown, being old Merchiston pupils of Almond, were on very intimate terms with him. One of the Alstons was a good caricaturist, and our Master's eccentricities furnished him with many a subject. In one of these sketches, as I happen to remember, the Head was represented as holding up his trousers with one hand, and stoning a salmon-pool with the other. His gillie—John Macleod, or the humorous old water-bailiff, John Macdonald—stood beside him with the rod. An immense bunch of worms was hanging from the end of the line. The practice of stoning pools, like many other original devices, was suggested by an accident. He had been fishing a pool in the Kirkaig one day when a blast from a neighbouring quarry threw some stones into the water. Soon afterwards he caught a fish. Acting on the hint, he made further experiments, and came to the conclusion that the method of stoning was among

the resources of the complete salmon-angler. Some fishers will be shocked to hear that, when all other means of catching salmon failed, Almond did not disdain the use of worms. It was characteristic of him to reject what he considered unreasonable etiquettes. But Harvie-Brown and his friends maliciously fastened upon the eccentricity, and rechristened Strathan 'Worm Lodge.' The joke was taken up by the gillies, who would laughingly refer to the cottage as 'Tigh na Beachan,' 'the House of the Worms,' and to the Head himself as 'Riach Beachan,' 'the Worm King.' Such chaff, however, did not blind them to the fact of Almond's skill as a salmon-fisher. 'One of the best fishers that ever came to Loch Inver?' echoed John Macleod, when interrogated upon this point. 'One of the best?' There was never one that cast a fly on Kirkaig to equal him.' Of this and of his general mastery of the art the Harvie-Brown party also were well aware. 'Come away, you fellows!' they would sometimes say after examining certain footprints at a loch side. 'It's no use flogging here. Look! tracks quite fresh!' 'What are they?' a stranger would wonderingly inquire. 'Why, don't you know? Almond has arrived!' It was particularly as a fine-water angler that he was distinguished on the Kirkaig. In those long droughts which sometimes occur in this region during the month of August his success was a wonder to the gillies.

Life at Loch Inver was not without its eventful incidents. Of one of these Mr. James Walker gives us the following account:—

'On one occasion we very nearly met with a watery grave. The Head had promised to go over sometime to Achnahaird and spend the day there. At last, what seemed a suitable day came. It was a bright morning, with just enough wind off the land for the small open boat we had at our disposal. All went well on our outward voyage, and we met with a warm welcome from the farmer and his wife, who at one time kept the Loch Inver Hotel. Coming home was a very different thing. We had not been sailing long when ominous clouds began to rise in the east. The wind came in nasty squalls, and we lowered the foresail, and took

in a reef in our mainsail. But the weather got worse and worse, and we took in all the reefs we could. Luckily we did so in time, as one squall, more violent than any we had hitherto encountered, very nearly capsized the boat. The sea was now a very choppy one, and we shipped water at every wave. How we ever got across Enard Bay safely is a mystery to me. Of course we were all soaked to the skin. I was in the bows, acting as ballast; John, the gillie, white as a ghost, had the tiller in one hand, and the main-sheet in the other; and I can see the Head now, kneeling on the boards and bailing the boat for all he was worth. What a relief it was to get into the shelter of the Loch Inver hills! It was indeed an eventful sail, and I am sure that both John and the Head thought we were done for. Not many years ago I asked the Head if he remembered that sail. "I've never forgotten it," he answered. "We were never nearer death than we were that day."

To Almond's skill as a heavy-water fisher John Ross, his gillie in later years on the Shin at Inveran during the month of March and the latter half of February, bears eloquent witness. He makes a special point of his cleverness in catching fish in places where no one else would have thought of angling. 'Did you ever see any one try for salmon in that run?' asked Almond once of his gillie. 'Never did,' replied John. 'Well, it seems to me a likely place to-day.' A fish was hooked almost at the first cast, and finally brought to land. The run was christened 'Never did.' There are a number of similar casts on this river of the virtues of which Almond was the first discoverer.

On the other hand, there were a good many days in most spring seasons on the Shin when his exceptional knowledge of the effect of weather conditions convinced him that it was useless to fish at all. No rise was to be expected in 'snawbroo,' for instance. In north wind, again, the angling was worthless because of the bellying line. In these cases, novices were surprised that he should stay about the inn when the river was apparently in good order. In the latter, they could not understand why he should repair so frequently to the top of a neighbouring hillock, and let his

handkerchief blow in the wind. On other occasions they were even more astonished to see him, after a brief glance at the skies, suddenly abandon his fishing of a certain pool, and start running at top speed along the river-bank. 'But I would be knowing,' says John in explanation, 'that he saw that in ten minutes' time there would be a cloud on the tail of Clarack. Many's the fish he caught that way.' On such occasions, if the weather was mild, and the cloud was rapidly nearing the acquired position, he was in the habit of casting off superfluous garments as he ran. These John, following at greater leisure, picked up and brought along. This habit of the Head's of divesting himself of unnecessary habiliments reminds me of a story which Colin Mackenzie had brought to Loretto many years before. Colin had been visiting in a part of Sutherland where our Master had fished, and asked one of the gillies if he remembered anything about him. 'Oh yes,' replied the gillie; 'that will be the gentleman who goes out to the fushin' with nothin' on, and leaves what little he has by the water-side.'

For a number of seasons previous to 1896 the angling in the salmon rivers of Sutherland steadily declined. The Head attributed this chiefly to over-netting, and in the above-mentioned year entered into partnership with Captain Hunt, the lessee of Inverpolly and Langwell, for the purpose of taking the salmon-net fisheries in the Kyle of Sutherland, which happened then to be vacant. Captain Hunt presently retiring from the business owing to ill health, the Head became sole proprietor of the fishings. A series of interesting experiments followed, which his premature death, alas! prevented him from bringing to any definite results. His general conclusion, however, was contained in the last words of his evidence given to the Royal Commission on Salmon Fisheries in 1901: 'If you want more fish, fish less.' He recommended also the formation of Joint-Stock Boards to take over the net fishing of large districts. In this way, he considered, the present blind methods might be abandoned, and scientific experiments conducted with a view of increasing the yield of fish.

During the last twenty years of his life the Head was

often at Inveran for the six weeks preceding the end of March. Occasionally, however, he passed that period at Dunkeld. Until the end of the season of 1896 he was usually at Strathan from the middle of June till the end of August, but afterwards rented the shooting-lodge of Drumruinie from the middle of June until the deer-stalking tenants came in the beginning of August. This arrangement continued until the end of July 1902. Drumruinie is situated in a splendid region of Ross-shire. It is forty-one miles from a railway station.


At all these Highland places he was usually accompanied by boys. Overgrowth and delicacy were often the causes of selection. 'Messer and Balfour are here,' he writes from Drumruinie. 'You remember how I used to bring up the overgrown animals.' An instance is quoted in a later chapter of his inviting a pupil over whom he hoped to gain a special influence. Such cases were not uncommon. But, in general, he asked the boys in whom, for one reason or another, he became interested in the course of his professional work. There is no question that the practice of being thus continually in the society of his pupils contributed much to the unique closeness of the relations which subsisted between them. But, at times, it tired him. 'Oh, he was very fond of them,' said John Macleod's wife, 'but when he was wearied, and they were talking, talking, talking, he would rather them to be on the Island of Soiya.'

Some provision was made for carrying on the work of boys who were asked in Term-time. A German governess was once engaged to help him with the lessons of the younger ones. During one period at Drumruinie he read through the whole of the *Odyssey* with a member of the Sixth; and, in general, he did so much writing and reading of his own during all his Highland sojourns that they were far from the restful times such holidays are usually supposed to be. Indeed, in the strict sense, the Head rarely took a holiday. He was almost always working four or five hours a day at some task or other. At times, his mind was so engrossed with these studies that his interest in sport was

quite subordinated. Of this Mr. Lang supplies us with a humorous illustration :—

‘After I went to Balliol I saw him but seldom. Many years later, I was fishing with the late Mr. William Black on the Oykel, and in Strathnaver. On my way south, I had an hour or two to spare at Inveran station, and walked up the beautiful banks of the Shin, to look at the water. Below me was an angler engaged with a salmon. He turned round, hailed me, and recognising the Head, I ran down the bank to join him. “Did you hear what Cheyne has been saying about the fifty-sixth Psalm?” he asked. I did not know, or care for the Rev. Mr. Cheyne’s remarks on the Psalms, but the Head proceeded to expose their futility to our common satisfaction. Meanwhile the salmon made a rush to the bottom of the pool, flounced up, and got clean away. The Head lost his fish, but not the thread of his discourse, which he continued as he reeled up the line. I rather think that his gillie had hooked the fish, but such lordly indifference to a fine salmon I never saw displayed.’

‘In the next spring,’ he continues—and with this quotation I shall bring this chapter to a close—‘the Head very kindly invited me to accompany him to Inveran, a delightful little inn beside the Shin. In the words of an old writer, I did the loaf, and he did the fishes. The weather was beautiful, the deep banks kept the sun off the pools, and lounging in the bracken, the gillie told me stories of the second sight, while we watched the fortunes of the Head. Fish were scarce but large. I had the luck to get the heaviest, twenty-three pounds, which was a trifle above the average. Everything was bliss, only shadowed by the memory of Montrose’s final defeat, on a wooded hill on the other side of the Kyle. That was a happy week. I never saw Dr. Almond afterwards, except now and then casually, when we met on the railway, I going down from Helmsdale, and he joining me at Inverness.’



CHAPTER XIII

CHARACTERISTICS—PERSONAL ANECDOTES

A NUMBER of anecdotes illustrative of the Head's character, and of observations with regard to his opinions and habits, have reached me. These I have not always found it possible to include in other portions of this work, and as I am unwilling to sacrifice them altogether, I have decided to devote to them this special chapter, arranging them herein with what connection they admit of.

The Head had a certain admiration for Eton, and at one time had thoughts of sending 'Geo' there. He judged by the actual output of the school, considering this the best criterion. He was attracted also by the absence at the college of that formalising tendency which is apt to characterise the more modern foundations. But, in general, he had a very poor opinion of English public schools. When asked on one occasion what he thought of ———, a well-known institution, he replied that he believed it was 'no worse than the ordinary school.' One reason for this attitude was to be found in the fact that, in regard to the moral part of education, to which he attached chief importance, the arrangements at most of the public schools are much less carefully planned than he thought necessary. The results in this department appeared to him correspondingly defective. In the selection of house-masters as of prefects, he considered that much more attention should be paid to the possession of a formative influence upon character, and that it was entirely improper to assign the care of the morals of boys to prefects chosen for scholarly acquirements, or masters selected for mere teaching power, or upon grounds of seniority. He would have recom-

mended such a readjustment of school finances as should provide the incomes required for masters of the latter types, without sacrificing to this necessity the characters of the boys. He was impatient also of that blind respect for the 'traditions of the school' which is characteristic of the greater institutions. The extreme difficulty of introducing improvements which interfere with these traditions seemed to him to put such schools at a serious disadvantage. 'The English public schools,' he remarks, 'seem to me bound not so much by red tape as by barbed wire.'

On the other hand, he had a high opinion of many preparatory schools, and considered preparatory school headmasters, as a class, much more competent and open-minded than the headmasters of public schools.

The Head did not admire foreigners. He never once set foot outside the island. In a letter written to me in 1876, he described the Russians as 'lying barbarians, smeared over with poisonous French polish.' 'Those poor Continentals,' he remarks in a letter to his wife, 'why, there is scarcely a sanely living man in the lot, so far as I can hear from those who have been abroad.' On one occasion, having a difference with a German master at Loretto, he wrote him a letter which the latter considered compromising. The Head was unable to regard it in the same light, and asked the other to let him see it. 'No, no,' replied the master, 'I vill not let you have that lettaire. I vill preserve it most carefully.' 'Herr ——,' said the Head scornfully, 'you take me for a German!' He was not without stings of conscience afterwards as having, for once, employed the method of sarcasm which he deprecated. He put the case to me. 'Do you think I was too hard on him, Bob?' he asked—a question which admitted of several different answers.

The Head's extreme frankness sometimes led to humorous incidents. 'You know, ——,' he once remarked to a successful business friend, 'I think you have pre-eminently the commercial mind.' 'Well, I dare say I have,' the friend replied, somewhat flattered. 'Of course, you know,' continued the Head meditatively, 'it's the lowest type of

mind.' On the other hand, he was himself the kind of man to whom anybody could say anything, so long as it was said sincerely. The sister of a large family of Loretto boys once gave me an amusing instance of this. 'I met your headmaster to-day in Princes Street,' she said. 'He had on a terribly old hat. "Mr. Almond," I said, "go and get a new hat!"' 'And what did he say?' I asked, rather scandalised at the liberty. 'He said it was very kind of me to mention it, and went and got one.' It was this same hat in all probability with regard to which the 'Skipper' had recently made a suggestion. 'Mr. Almond,' he said, 'next time you want to sit down, I recommend that it should not be on your 'at.'

Like most men of studious habits, the Head had a horror of 'functions.' The following letter of 1883 to Mr. Whaley B. Nutt, at that time Elocution master at Loretto, gives amusing evidence of this:—

'I am delighted to hear of your first-born, and that every one concerned is well. So I am sure will my wife be. But I opened the letter, as she is in Durham. They had one of the fusses there which she rejoices in, and which I would sooner stampede from than approach. One of those numerous (though expensive) royal scions, he of Albany, after feasting in modern fashion, and duly buttering and being buttered, came (oh joy!) to her father's house for afternoon tea, and brought a long "tail" with him to that awful function. Fancy what a heaven-abandoned way of spending a fine afternoon! Well, it pleases her, and so here I am, supporting life as a bachelor for two or three days. To-day I have driven away my sorrow by a sixteen-mile walk, and meditated on the delights, to me denied, of being in a drawing-room packed with a Prince and "tail," and seeing them all drink tea. Do you know that exquisite song in *Fly Leaves*, "O that Cherry Pie!"'

The remainder of the letter is out of place in this connection, but I quote it for its own sake:—

'Well. By all means don't come on Saturday. In fact, I don't think it's your day. You are a much better man than I am. I used to run away from the atmosphere of

baby-worship. The first we had, the housekeeper nearly scratched my eyes out. She had weighed it—where they weigh the meat, I suppose—and found out it was $7\frac{1}{2}$ pounds (now can you come up to that?), and I had profanely asked how much per pound?

‘Now I hope she will grow into a girl like the Lexington converts. Now this is a compliment. It’s the first time I ever called a baby anything but “it.”’

‘*P.S.*—How thankful we should be we don’t belong to those savages who put the husband to bed, and tend him like the wife!’

Before his marriage the Head used to dine out occasionally. In connection with one of these dinners there is a story which may be taken as typical of much of his eccentricity. Each step in his action it will be observed is reasonable. It is to the neglect of common ways of doing things, and to a certain absent-mindedness, that the ludicrous result is due. He was asked out to dinner in Edinburgh, and, finding he had no dress-boots, went to a shop in Musselburgh, and bought a pair. As the boots were very tight, he decided to put them on without socks, and made his way thus to his friend’s house. The boots were still most uncomfortable, however, and at dinner he drew them off gently under the table, intending to replace them before the end of the repast. Soon he became immersed in conversation, and forgot all about the boots. At length it was time for the ladies to withdraw, and it so happened that it fell to the Head’s lot to open the door. It is difficult to say whether the company or the Head himself were the more surprised when, advancing for this purpose with his usual geniality, he exhibited a couple of wonderful bare feet. At this distance of time one cannot tell what additions, if any, the mythopœic faculty has made to the solid fact of this legend. I give the tale as I remember it.

For the last twenty-five years of his life, as has been elsewhere mentioned, the Head almost abandoned general society. Dining out ~~was~~ to him at last a rare experience to be essayed with caution. ‘I dined at Culag Monday,’

he writes to his wife in 1886 from Loch Inver, 'and liked it muchly, but should not like it often. The drawing-room business rather palls on me. I like the dining-room time, but when it comes to playing "games," and a "little music," it's a bore.'

There was a fine, old-fashioned courtesy about the Head's manners, particularly to ladies. He was very gentle and humane to his dependants, and loved to establish pleasant relations with people of every class. If by haste of temper or absent-mindedness he was at any time betrayed into discourtesy, he never failed to apologise. An old boy mentions that on one occasion he was with the Head in Dalkeith Park. They made for a certain seat which overlooks the meeting of the waters already referred to, and, coming suddenly in view of it round the trunk of a big tree, 'Ah! Those tiresome lovers!' cried the Head, almost before he was aware. The seat was already in the possession of a young couple, who blushed scarlet at the disconcerting speech. After walking on a few paces the Head turned, and went back to them. 'I must ask your pardon,' he said, 'for my very rude utterance. It dropped out almost without my meaning it. You don't put us out in the least by being here. We shall find just as pleasant a seat a little further on.' And with that he took off his hat and departed, leaving the rustic pair almost as puzzled as they had before been confused.

In that less important department of manners which boys learn either in the nursery or not at all, he was somewhat deficient. 'I am unobservant about table manners,' he writes to a parent, 'and so I am sorry to say was my mother, for my own are very bad.'

The suddenness of his temper at times gave rise to unexpected scenes at meals. On a certain occasion, when he and his party were staying in a Highland hotel, the waiter brought in a leg of mutton which was 'very high.' 'John,' cried our Master furiously as soon as the cover was removed, 'how dare you bring that horrid thing here?' and, seizing the offending joint by the bone, he thrust it bodily into the fire. The too frequent appear-

ance of red herring at breakfast once provoked a similar explosion at Loretto. The unwelcome fare was flung out upon the gravel. One may picture the dismay of the guest who told the story, as he saw his breakfast thus unexpectedly vanish out of window.

In curious contrast with the ardour of the Head's temperament and the general decision of his manners was the feebleness of his method of shaking hands. Some men, not otherwise energetic, endeavour to crush the knuckles which you unsuspectingly confide to them. The Head's handshake, on the contrary, was the limpest and most nerveless imaginable.

He had a great love of natural beauty. Bright colours in dress, the clear complexions of boys and girls, the charm of diatonic melody filled him with delight. To the taste for sombre hues in garments and furnishings he had an almost religious objection. No one, he considered, would naturally like these colours. It was a worship of ugliness to admire them. In this, as in other spheres, fashion was the great perverting influence. The following excerpt from a letter to his wife gives a pleasant example of his own admiration for beauty undorned:—

‘Then —— ran in with your delicious note, bare-headed, looking so lovely. She apologised (oh dear!) for being untidy. I never knew how beautiful she was, and I nearly told her so. For I had always seen her in the hideous garb of respectability. But with her cheeks glowing, her hair flowing, more like a goddess than a young lady—oh! It was a sight! Oh that respectability!’

From the time of his nervous break-down in 1882 the Head had a horror of physical pain. He would sometimes speak of it as the only real evil in life. A pupil once described to him what he had suffered in rheumatic fever. ‘I hope I shall never have an illness like that,’ the Head exclaimed. ‘I couldn’t stand it. They would despise me.’ He had had singularly little pain to suffer, and this was perhaps partly the reason of his fear. *Omne ignotum pro magnifico*. Yet the dread of death, which seemed to be no less strong in Almond, died out of his mind when he found

himself in the presence of death. Had he been called upon to face severe pain, it is probable that he would have borne it as well as another. Men of high-strung temperament are oppressed by these imaginative terrors ; but it is in prospect that they are most formidable. It is not till the supreme moment comes that the mind realises its own power.

When I say that the Head had a dread of death, it may be that I produce a wrong impression. It would be more correct to say that he was greedy of life. This was partly because he enjoyed life so intensely, but in later years even more because he felt he had a work to do to which no one else was paying much attention. His extraordinary vitality, which seemed to quicken as life advanced, suggested that he was exempt from ordinary rules. He seldom reflected that the sands were running out. When he had passed his tenth lustre, he could not see why people should deprecate septuagenarian Principals. When he was in his 'sixties' he looked forward to an octogenarian term. Had he lived a few years beyond the allotted span, we should no doubt have heard of an ardent nonagenarian, nay, of a lusty centenarian Headmaster. Perhaps the very last walk I had with him he was discussing the question of the succession to Loretto. Tristram was, of course, the man, but there was a difficulty. 'You see, Bob,' he explained, 'some twenty years hence I may be working away here as vigorously as ever, and by that time poor Tristram will be superannuated.' Ah, charming Head ! So rich in hope and the moving spirit of life ! Your date was shorter than you knew, and Tristram has succeeded you in the vigour of his prime.

The Head had some curious ways which are not without their interest. One of these was his habit of playing patience, while dictating business letters. His mind seemed to work better for the double occupation. John Ross mentions the strange pleasure he took in burning the heather, and gives as explanation that it relieved the tension of his mind in periods of overwork. Mr. J. G. Walker refers to a similar liking. The Head would drive at times to Stoer Head, and amuse himself there by dislodging the boulders, and

watching them bound over the cliff into the sea. This is a diversion, however, with which many will sympathise. Another of his habits is less easily explained, namely, that of draining off the pools of water that gathered on the roadway after rain. Sometimes he would make a runnel for the water with his foot, and sometimes, when no other task was toward, John has even known him fetch a spade for this purpose.

He was rather self-indulgent in little ways, and used to decide cases of conscience in his own favour in a somewhat casuistical fashion. Sometimes, if he felt uneasy in mind, he would put the question to a friend. 'Do you think it is right,' he once asked me, 'that I should take a boy away from Sunday evening chapel to go for a walk with me?' I suggested that both claims might be satisfied, if he went to chapel himself, and walked with the boy afterwards. 'Ah! but you must remember, Bob,' he replied hastily, 'that a second Sunday chapel does not suit me at all. I have to be very careful about that.'

He was somewhat extravagant in money matters. If an object was good in itself and gave him pleasure, he thought too little of the cost. As commonly happens, this defect was closely associated with one of his best qualities. He was the most generous of men. He never would allow the failure or lessened income of Loretto parents to interfere with the schooling of their sons. He would make special arrangements to admit deserving boys. In many years his sacrifice of income under these heads was considerably over £1000 annually, and in one year amounted to no less than £1750. At Oxford also, he helped a number of boys, and to colleagues and former pupils who were in temporary difficulties was more than usually kind. On less important occasions he had the most graceful way of giving presents. Mr. Lamert mentions his solving a difference with him upon the subject of golf by the gift of a driver. I remember his once terminating a somewhat eager controversy which we had had upon the respective merits of Handel and Mendelssohn by presenting me with a copy of the *Lieder ohne Worte*.

In one respect, if in no other, the Head's opinions were curiously similar to those of Sir Walter Scott. He believed that the importance of literary genius was altogether over-estimated now. 'What is the use of my talking with you,' he once cried to a scholarly friend, 'when you would rather be Tennyson than the Duke of Wellington, and I would rather be W. G. Grace than Tennyson?' This flagrant speech did not represent his real opinion. But it is certain that he considered Lord Shaftesbury a greater Englishman than Shakspeare, that he would rather have discovered a safe anæsthetic than written the *Decline and Fall*. The intense practicality of his mind was here apparent. He revered achievement in proportion to its usefulness. He had a vast admiration for great literature. But great philanthropy was more essential. A nation could be happy without poets and historians. It could not be happy in the agonies of toothache, or sweated in factories fourteen hours a day.

The original quality of the Head's mind made itself felt in everything that he did. We have already called attention to its influence upon him as a salmon-fisher. It was no less conspicuous in the matter of games. An instance of this is to be found in the part he took with regard to the introduction of the closure rule at cricket. He had advocated this rule a dozen years before its acceptance, and his arguments in favour of it were not without their weight with the Marylebone Sub-Committee who sanctioned the change. Another illustration of the same characteristic is to be found in the ingenious suggestion contained in one of his later letters, that, in order to limit the length of scores at cricket, batsmen who had made fifty runs should be obliged to play with a half-breadth bat.

Some mention should be made of the Head's political position. It was one of the most anomalous facts in his history. As has already been amply shown, he was singularly radical in the temper and attitude of his mind; and yet in politics he was a strong Conservative. Contradictions of this sort were characteristic of Almond's intelligence. He was entirely free from that dread of inconsistency which Emerson asserts to be the bugbear of little minds. A friend once remarked

of him that his intellect was arranged in water-tight compartments. Principles and arguments which were allowed full scope in one sphere were rigorously excluded from another. Yet he was always tending towards lucidity. Ten more years of life and he would have survived most of his prejudices. His political attitude, however, was not altogether a case of prejudice. The spirit of Liberalism as he conceived it was the antipodes of his own. He regarded it as an unpractical temper, devoted to reforms of machinery, such as Disestablishment and the lowering of the franchise, which had little bearing on the true welfare of the nation. The happiness of the people (which, of course, is the end of all politics) depended, in his view, chiefly upon the physical and moral conditions of their lives. The provision of open spaces in towns, the spread of hygienic knowledge, insistence upon sanitary schemes of house-building, the promotion of temperance, in education a proper care for the physique of the children, and their careful training and instruction in healthy habit—these were, in his opinion, the measures of prime importance. It was for their almost total neglect of such matters, and their blind devotion to a material progress, purchased at the expense of the breed of the race, that he abhorred the Liberals. They were to him the false prophets of a decadent period, shallow pedants who busied themselves with trifles, while they ignored questions of grave moment. And of this temper Gladstone was to him the archetype. ‘Gladstone always struck me as the great author of evil,’ he writes in 1900, ‘not so much because I differed from him about particular things, as because he kept the public mind constantly upon such questions as Home Rule, Disestablishment, etc., etc., which could make people no better or happier, if they had carried the whole Newcastle programme.’ He seldom misses a chance of having a hit at the great leader. Some of his irreverences are amusing enough. ‘I think the extract on the back will charm you,’ he writes to Canon Tristram. ‘Extract from Norman Macleod’s *Life*, volume ii. page 155: “Went to Balmoral, found Gladstone had gone. Preached in the morning on ‘*Peace not happiness*,’ and in the evening on ‘*The Gadarene Demoniack!*’” Or again, to a

salmon-fishing friend : 'Did you ever notice how a kelt wriggles before being landed ? Is the G.O.M. a clean fish ?' Occasionally Mr. Bright is the victim of his flippancy, as in the accompanying passage : 'Fishing—well, I have fished more than a fortnight six or seven hours per day, and caught two salmon. Where they are this year no one knows. Perhaps in some other river, in one of Mr. Bright's favourite *lies*. You know he is a salmon-fisher, don't you ? Pray don't suppose I hint anything against his unimpeachable veracity. A lie is also a place where salmon like to be—as well as the statement that British soldiers massacre wounded enemies.' But he soon returns to Mr. Gladstone, as in the following wicked suggestion : 'Thank God W. E. G. took up Home Rule ! I sometimes doubt whether he didn't do it with a deep patriotic motive, viz. to kill the Radical Party.'

CHAPTER XIV

RELATIONS—SCHOOL AND GENERAL

BUT enough of these scattered notices. The main interest of a great schoolmaster's life is rarely to be found in the incidents which it contains. It consists rather in the tracing of certain lines of effort, steadily followed, as a rule, from the beginning of the career to the end of it, impossible therefore to treat in narrative chapters. Thus Arnold stands principally for the religious ideal in education; Thring perhaps chiefly for the artistic; Almond, as we shall see, for the scientific. To Arnold education is an answer to the question—How shall we train a servant of God? to Thring—How shall we produce a life instinct with the spirit of fitness? to Almond—How shall we apply the best knowledge of the day to the nurture of the young? How shall we produce in them the rational spirit which chooses always what is best rather than what is customary?—in a word, How shall we train boys scientifically? How shall we produce in them the scientific temper?

But before proceeding to describe this great and separate work of Almond, it may be found convenient to deal further with that part of his life which he shares with all schoolmasters, indeed, with all workers of every kind. I refer to his human relations, and, in particular, to the most important of these, his relation to boys, and masters, and parents. Incidental allusion has already been made to this aspect of his life. We shall now consider it directly. In later chapters I shall speak of Almond, the propagandist and pioneer. In this chapter I propose to attempt a picture of Almond, the man.

Almond was no believer in the theory that a school is,

in the first instance, a place of learning. The Olympic intellectualism of Gaisford, which found expression in the famous rejoinder to a parent: 'Madam, I am here to teach your son Greek, not morals,' he regarded with an angry scorn. If less vulgar, the saying was, in his view, no less immoral than the companion speech attributed to a distinguished Indian coach, that he 'did not care where the souls of his pupils went, so long as their bodies went to India.' His own opinion was free at once of the sublimity of the Dean and the commercialism of the crammer. 'Character, physique, intelligence, manners, and information'—these he held to be the five great objects of education, and in that order.

For the last twenty years of his headmastership, as has been mentioned, he was relieved of the burden of supervising the ordinary studies of the School. In this respect his position was a most enviable one, and altogether unique in the educational arrangements of the country. Some such devolution of tasks was, however, necessary to the ideal of a School in which the training of character held the foremost place. It left him leisure for those intimate personal relations with boys which the exercise of a moulding influence demands.

Headmasters, in general, are a hard-driven race. The size of the great schools, and the ever-multiplying requirements of examinations oblige most of them to adopt brief methods of government. They have not time to cultivate close personal relations with their pupils. The training of individual character is a thing denied to them. Except on those rare occasions when some sudden touch of nature brings them face to face with the solitary soul of some boy, they must deal with their pupils forensically and in masses. The house-masters are scarcely less engrossed, and many of them, having won their positions by seniority or success in teaching, have not the capacities and sympathies which the possession of a formative gift requires. Of all artistic faculties the power of communicating a distinctive impress to character is among the rarest. It is seldom that we find among public school boys the mark of a particular personality, the stamp and brand of a special influence.

But to Almond the work of training the individual character was the principal duty of a headmaster. He brought to the task a subtlety of insight, a wealth of sympathy, and a versatility of power which amounted to genius. He was quite untouched by the worldliness which leads so many schoolmasters to take an interest chiefly in the brilliant and attractive members of their flock. 'I would rather,' he once wrote to a parent, 'have a school of dull boys than of clever ones.' The distinction between a 'gentleman' and 'no gentleman' meant much to him. But masters used to note with surprise that many of his friends were among the rougher diamonds of the School. 'His refined, fastidious nature,' he once complained of a colleague, 'doesn't like the cheery, vigorous *bounder*.' He himself had none of that scorn of defects which is the snare of gifted men. His deep understanding of boy-nature made him gentle with the foibles of youth. He never indulged in those savage snubbings of conceit with which donnish persons are apt to terminate their influence with high-spirited pupils. He considered the use of sarcasm one of the few 'fatal blemishes' in a master. Of the golden rules which he gave to his colleagues none was more dwelt on than this: that they should never wound the *amour propre* of any boy.

He was singularly democratic in his views of school life. Intellectual gifts and athletic prowess did little to attract his interest. He had, indeed, an unusual respect for the ordinary boy, and the value he attached to the opinions of ordinary boys sometimes seemed absurd to those who had a narrower and more superficial idea of success. 'I only wish I could always know,' he once wrote to a colleague, 'all they think about everything and everybody, myself included.' Of himself he would rarely have come upon any opinion which had not already been communicated to him, for he encouraged all his pupils in complete freedom of speech. His own disregard of reticence in his dealings with them was astonishing. 'I would rather leave my honour in the hands of boys,' he is reported to have said, 'than in the hands of any other class in the community.' He had indeed few secrets from

us, and would discuss his most cherished plans with the youngest members of the School. 'You know, I think the Head quite right,' said a little fellow once to a new master, after explaining what Almond thought of a certain matter. It was this intelligent concurrence on the part of every boy that the Head desired to win. 'The main object in dealing with boys,' he wrote to Mr. M'Lachlan, 'is to secure behind-back obedience. The surface order, and freedom from apparent hitches, of most of the public schools is easily obtained by being peremptory and absolute. But the other is what is truly valuable.'

Thus it was a leading maxim of his policy that he should never rule by force. 'I firmly believe,' he writes, 'that part of my power of getting boys to do what I want is owing to my known reluctance to act.' More, probably, than any headmaster of his time he realised the might of patience. He would never make an important change, until he felt sure of carrying the School with him. If at any time the personal equation was against him, he would delay the institution of a special improvement until a succeeding set of boys had grown. As has already been explained, his weapon was not force but persuasion. The atmosphere of the School was that of a debating society. The place was alive with discussion. In 'jaws' at 'Doubles,' in casual colloquies with boys and masters, in talks at meals or during walks, the Head was continually ventilating his opinions, and inviting criticism. Not infrequently in such conversations the fertility of his imagination and the interest of debate rendered both him and his interlocutor oblivious of the passage of time. 'A certain very influential master,' Mr. Ian Little writes, 'was at School working during the holidays. Head suddenly burst into his room when he was very busy. He began at once: "I see you're busy. Well, I have only one thing to say to you, and it won't take a minute." That master weakly consented. When he came to himself again, some hours later, he was walking up and down Musselburgh Station arm in arm with the Head, who was still talking.' He was singularly tolerant of straightforward opposition, and made little, in the heat of argument,

of unparliamentary phrase. 'You must be a d—d fool if you think that!' once cried out a young and ardent master to whom he was maintaining one of his paradoxical positions. 'I may be a d—d fool, ——,' the Head replied sweetly, 'but ——' and continued the discussion. Covert opposition, on the other hand, he could not endure. As an old Lorettonian puts it in schoolboy phrase, 'You could tell the Head to his face that a new rule was "beastly rot," but woe betide you if he caught you saying so behind his back.'

A school conducted with so much frankness had no need of those little reserves and hypocrisies which are apt to grow up between master and boy in institutions where life is more formal. 'Do you smoke?' the Head once asked of a graduate who was applying for a post. The latter reluctantly admitted that he did. 'Don't conceal it!' was the Head's unexpected rejoinder. 'Smoke all about the place!' He aimed at a complete simplicity and openness of relations, and it was as interfering with such an ideal that he most disliked the cap-and-gown dignity which is still affected by a certain school of masters.

Relations between masters and boys were thus unusually sincere, and the place had rather the aspect of a family than of a school, the masters being more like elder brothers to the boys than pedagogues, and the Head himself to most of them 'Daddy No. II.' 'How many children have you now?' an old boy asked of Mrs. Almond after Jocelyn's birth. 'A hundred and thirty-six,' she replied. There were a hundred and thirty boys that term in the School.

This family character of Loretto was due in great measure to the extraordinary kindness of the Head's own disposition, and the continual pains he took to promote a similar spirit among the boys. Mention has already been made of the earnestness with which he would dwell upon the duty of befriending the lonely, and the cruelty and meanness of making sets against the unpopular. Of the ways of unregenerate boys in this latter particular his fowl-breeding experiences in college days at Glasgow supplied him with a happy illustration. 'Why, it's like this,' he would say, in those homely talks at 'Doubles,' which did so much to form

the tone of the School. 'There's an ugly chicken in a brood. And first one pecks at it, then another, then a third. After that all the rest think it their duty to peck at it. Do you imagine that ugly chicken has a happy time?' He was singularly successful in banishing from the place all bitterness and rancour. One of the wise hints which he gave to Mr. M'Lachlan, when conveying to him the offer of the vicegerency, was that he should always suppose, as long as possible, that there was an explanation of anything that seemed unaccountable in the conduct of man or boy. He himself traced much of his own success with boys to the fact that if at any time relations were strained, he never let a day pass without trying to restore them. He had none of the pride which refuses to admit a fault, and would apologise, if need were, to the smallest boy in the School without thought of injury to his dignity.

But for this complete confidence between himself and his boys the Head could never have displayed that capacity for moulding character to which he assigned so high a place, and which was perhaps his own most remarkable endowment. Many things went to form his gift, and of these the most important was the depth of his belief in boy-nature. True, his faith had its limits. 'I have known some boys and more men,' he remarks in one of the sermons, 'of whom, if I had heard that they had turned out good men, I would have felt awe-struck, as in the presence of a miracle.' But, in general, he appeared to be unconscious that there is such a thing among boys as depravity, and seemed to have a boundless confidence in powers of recovery, and in the final victory of right in the individual character. This moral optimism was itself a force. Not unfrequently it begot the qualities it believed in. And of this he was himself aware. 'Don't tell me anything which gives me a worse opinion of the boy's character,' he would say to colleagues who requested him to use his influence in difficult cases. 'If you do, all my power goes.' No doubt he was sometimes deceived. But this he accepted as the inevitable drawback of his method. It was characteristic of his mind to make for large positive gains in every field, and to

disregard as much as possible the disadvantages which invariably accompany them.

The warmth of his affection, again, and the depth and delicacy of his insight, were other parts of his gift. But not less important were the width and freshness of his interest in the play of faculty and endowment. To him the spectacle of boy-nature never lost its charm. Each character was a problem new and individual. 'Change of boys yesterday,' he writes to his wife from Loch Inver one August. 'I shall miss A—— far the most. He grew on me, and B—— lost. He is greedy, and indolent, and somewhat selfish. The character of C—— I do not know. I haven't even a probable guess at his real character. On a balance I put him down for a very good boy. But I can't be quite sure that I see him through. B—— I am sure is a good boy, and I think I can do something to cure his faults.'

Like all wise educators he dwelt much on faults, and spared no pains to eradicate them. In most cases, as in letters quoted in the following chapter, his method was one of utter frankness, but, sometimes, in these pious labours, he was capable of a little finesse. I remember his once dealing with me about some fault to which I was attached. After speaking to me on several occasions without effect, he said one day: 'I should be inclined to be severe with you, Bob, if I did not know you were trying so hard to get rid of this fault.' I was not trying in the least, and later experience has convinced me that the Head must have known this as well as I. But the reflection was far too deep for me at the time. When I had leisure to think over the Head's remark, it seemed to me a mean thing not to try if he thought I was trying. I tacitly abandoned the fault. There is a similar touch of subtlety in his advice to Mr. M'Lachlan: 'One little practical hint. If ever emotionally throwing your whole force to change a boy's way of thinking from wrong to right, use his Christian name. It acts on old home associations, and helps to soften him. If you soften him, you win, and to win you must, to some extent, "stoop to conquer."'" The following remark, again, in a

letter to a parent whose son he had invited to go with him to Dunkeld belongs rather to genial Jesuit methods, as we conceive them, than to any Puritan modes of influence. 'If I could only get a personal hold over that boy, I believe I could do something to make him in earnest about his work and life and character. . . . He is a boy to whom any sort of lecturing or preaching can do nothing but harm. The way to influence him is to get on good terms with him, and give him what boys call "a good time." Boys will often then do anything one wishes without any pressure or scolding—at least, such is my experience.'

The variety of his resources was another ingredient of his power. He was not pinned to any one way. It was never possible to say how he would deal with a given case. 'I was inclined to pessimism as a boy,' writes Mr. Lamert in the *Memories*. 'Not so much affectation, I think, though something of that, as the fruit of knowledge and experience in childhood of things it is not good the child should know. The Head argued with me gravely, chided me, chaffed me. He wrote to an old boy about me. "A pessimistic boy of sixteen is a monstrosity," was the reply. "Expel him!" He showed me the letter with huge glee. And then one day he took me out walking : alone, not with another boy as his custom was. It was a day in early spring ; brilliant sunshine, with a tang of clean cold in the air which quickened the blood and set the pulse a-dancing with the sheer joy of physical existence. He talked of nature in Dalkeith Park as only the sportsman can talk, the wild life and the burgeoning tree ; and when we stood on that favourite spot of his where the river forks and joins, and the two Esks come dancing down to meet and flow in one broad stream to the sea, he laid his hand on my shoulder, and said simply : "Don't be pessimistic, Lamb."'

But it is impossible to give an adequate impression of the versatility of this artist in character, who was master of the whole gamut of boy-nature, and could draw forth its deeper harmonies, undreamt of by the common ear.

His methods were not all tactful. The mild disapproval of iniquity which is sufficient to maintain the negative virtues

of the respectable was replaced in him by a more vivid mood. He had a burning hatred of impurity, and gluttony, and selfishness, and cruelty, and when roused by manifestations of these vices, his anger, as an old boy remarks, was 'grand and awful.' At such times, as has been already referred to, his face, always dark in complexion, seemed to grow positively black—a phenomenon which struck terror to the stoutest hearts. In the early days of the School, indeed, this gift of anger had not always been under control, but found vent on trivial occasions, and in improper ways. Boxes on the ear were by no means uncommon then, and would have been less so but for our skill in guarding. There was a tradition that the Head had once bitten the chalk in three pieces in his irritation at a pupil's slowness; and, on a certain famous Sunday when, owing to a mistake of the housekeeper, the boys at the training-table had been served with pies, the offending dainties were suddenly converted into missile weapons, one of them taking unpleasant effect, it is said, upon the face of a boy in a neighbouring part of the hall who had had no share in the misdemeanour. Gradually the Head gained complete command of his temper, but behind all his gentleness, and tact, and patience, there was always the possibility of thunder. He considered himself deficient in personal magnetism, but, in this Jovian way, he was not without it. He was the only man I ever knew who could smite me on a sudden with the inrush of pale fear.

But the Head's relations with his boys were by no means always those of a father in God. He had all a Frenchman's love of pleasant talk, and was the brightest and friendliest of souls. In early years, as has been mentioned, he dined out at times in Edinburgh, and was a good deal about the University Club during the terms. In the long holidays he had much pleasant intercourse with Lord Mackenzie, Mr. Austen Leigh, Mr. Harvie-Brown and others who frequented the inn at Loch Inver. He was thus kept to some extent in touch with the great world, and had the advantage of that intelligent criticism on the part of men engaged in other employments which schoolmasters so seldom come by. But

after his marriage the Club saw little of him, and the move to Strathan for holiday quarters deprived him, for the most part, of the social resources of the inn. From that time, also, he almost gave up the practice of dining out, and his society was thus chiefly confined to boys and masters, and a few Musselburgh friends. From this retired mode of life he derived a considerable gain in force and singleness of aim, but, as we shall see, a certain loss of lucidity. Original persons can least of all dispense with the discipline of general opinion.

But the abandonment of other relations gave him all the more time for intercourse with his pupils. He had, indeed, a genius for making friends with boys. Of the thousand, more or less, who were under his charge at Loretto, how many, when they read this chapter, will say: 'The Head was my intimate friend'? Some hundreds surely. There was only one type of character which baffled him, the type of coldness and reserve. The reticent youth who heard all he had to say and kept his own counsel brought a counter-charm which was proof against his gift. But the ordinary boy passed easily from liking to friendship, and from friendship to an intimacy closer often than he had with his own father.

During the last twenty years of his headmastership his freedom from the ties of ordinary school management increased still further the time he could give to such intercourse. 'Before I left this term,' he writes in July 1901, 'I had had seventy boys in pairs to tea, a long walk, and supper; and (don't frown) my prefects may come to my study or garden in summer, and smoke pipes from 9.30 to 10.30 P.M. They usually most of them come three times a week. No form or ceremony—a flannel-shirt and, when hot, shirt-sleeve affair for all of us. In fact, I treat them as a father who cares for his sons would treat them at eighteen to twenty, with probably less distance.' 'Grown-up male society,' he continues, 'has not usually anything like the charm for me that boy society has. A man who is not keen on subjects is a bore to me, one who is, an intense strain. A boy is a rest and refreshment.' Prefects, indeed,

in later years, he found too tiring for walks. His companions then were chiefly boys of fifteen or sixteen, less closely associated with the management of the School. He had the rare faculty of putting such boys completely at their ease. They talked to him with the utmost freedom of all that interested them. Nor had he with them that tendency to monopolise the conversation of which latterly his older friends complained. This was one of the penalties he paid, or rather exacted, for his desertion of general society. If one walked eight miles with him in later years, he was too apt to talk at least seven and a half—a tyrannous proportion. But with boys it was different. He loved to hear them talk.

Keen observers were sometimes puzzled at the nature of the relationship between Almond and his pupils, for in those of us who knew the Head best a deep respect for his virtues and a high admiration of his abilities was mingled with a humorous surprise. One never knew what to expect of that rich personality which looked at everything with its own eyes, and took the course that seemed most reasonable, oblivious of appearances. Every day there was some new story about the Head. We were never done laughing at him. It is strange that this constant amusement did not in the least interfere with our loyalty. We would never allow an 'outsider' to laugh. Mr. Henry Johnstone gives a happy illustration of this attitude. 'Long after my own departure from Loretto,' he writes, 'I met a young Loretto boy one day on the Dean Bridge. He asked me the way to Raeburn Place, and as I was going there myself, we agreed to go together. I asked him how the Head was. "Quite well," he told me. "Has he been doing anything odd lately?" said I. "Odd! What do you mean?" asked the boy angrily. "Doesn't he sometimes do odd things?" I asked. "Certainly not," said the boy. "Well," said I, "when I was at Loretto——" "Oh!" he said, "if you were at Loretto, I'll tell you what he did yesterday"—and he told me.'

The Head was well aware of the amusement he excited among his boys and did not in the least resent it. Very

often he would join in the laugh himself. It is the weakness of headmasters of the strenuous, unhumorous, Arnoldian type that they seldom get on other than official terms with their pupils. The desire of fun is so much bound up in the heart of youth that it may be doubted if boys are ever really at home with a man they cannot laugh at. It is certain that the Head's eccentricity was a part of his power. It had its full share in creating the closeness of the relations which existed between him and his pupils.

How close these relations were it is amusing to recall. 'I beg your pardon, sir,' a certain prefect was credited with saying to the Head as they started for Sunday walks, 'but your hat wants brushing.' 'Do brush it for me, Jimmie!' The hat was rendered more respectable, and the pair set forth along the 'Woody Walk.' 'Excuse me, sir,' said the boy presently, 'but might I tie your necktie?' 'It would be so kind of you.' (The Head had a wonderful way of constructing a sailor's knot by making a noose at one end of the tie and pulling the other end through.) The tie was adjusted. Before they reached the Town Hall, the boy had possessed himself of the Head's umbrella, a cotton 'gamp' of methodistical leanings, which he rolled up artistically; and, having effected these various improvements in his patron's appearance, was ready to join him in the discussion of all things in heaven and earth, from the futility of metaphysics to the absurdity of obliging a side to continue an innings—for it was before the days of the closure rule—to its own disadvantage.

Even with much younger boys the usual barriers had been thrown down. The Head had a bad habit of bolting his food, and it was understood that boys dining with him should remind him of this, if occasion arose. It was a surprising thing to a stranger who had been listening with much respect to the brilliant conversation of his host to hear a small boy sing out suddenly: 'You're eating too fast, Head'—yet more surprising to hear the Head thank the boy, and see him painfully endeavour for nearly a minute afterwards to conform to Mr. Gladstone's canon.

Counting cups of tea was another of the duties which

boys discharged at meals. With regard to this practice Mr. Ian Little tells an amusing story which throws a happy sidelight upon the relations which I have been attempting to describe. 'You remember the way Head used to pour a very little dribble of tea into the bottom of his cup in case he drank too much? Well, once when I was up at Dunkeld he was talking at tea-time, when he suddenly stopped and said, "How many cups have I had?" He had had three dribbles; but, like a fool, I tried to be weakly funny, and said solemnly, "Fifteen!" It never struck the Head that it wasn't true. He was simply aghast at the idea. What a night he should have of it! The doctor had said he was never to take more than three. I then went through a bad five minutes, while I tried to explain that it was not true, that it was meant as a joke, that I had not thought he would believe it, and so on—blushing furiously, and almost inarticulate with embarrassment. Presently I stopped short. I had caught a twinkle in the Head's eye, and suddenly realised that he had seen my attempt at being funny, and had completely turned the tables on me by pretending not to see and making me explain.'

But Loretto was not only a family. It was also a society with a highly organised form of government. 'It's an awful place, Loretto,' said a very undisciplined boy of my acquaintance who was there for a brief period. 'There's always somebody after you all day long.' That somebody out of school-hours was seldom a master, for the Head had carried the public school system of the government of boys by boys further probably than it has been carried elsewhere. Prefects, house-prefects, heads of bedrooms, and heads of schoolrooms formed four sets of officials who had their several duties to discharge. With regard to prefects and house-prefects, Almond held that the success of the system of boy-government depended on keeping a sufficient number of the best boys at School till eighteen or nineteen years of age. Boys of sixteen or seventeen had not, he considered, the seriousness and force of character required in good prefects. Much of his effort with parents was therefore

devoted to the task of getting the right kind of boys to stay. In letters of this kind, while frankly admitting the School interest in the matter, he was in the habit of appealing to the public spirit of boy and parent. 'It is the best part of a boy's whole education,' he would say, 'when he can be placed in a position of trust, and has to look after other people in an unselfish way.' He regarded it as one of the most unfortunate results of the present system of army entrance that it deprived future officers of this most valuable part of a public school training.

In the selection of prefects he considered nothing but character and governing power, and utterly disapproved of the common public school plan of using the prefectorial system for the aggrandisement of scholarship. Discipline, chastity, manliness, mercy were interests, in his opinion, too grave to be subordinated to intellectual considerations. Mere scholarship afforded no stronger presumption than mere athletic prowess that a boy should be able to govern others. In the choice of prefects, therefore, he disregarded both physical and intellectual accomplishments, except in so far as they contributed to the capacity he was in search of, and it was by no means uncommon for an eminent athlete, or a brilliant scholar, to have no part in the prefectorial government of the School. It was to be expected that Loretto prefects, being thus appointed solely for governing power, should be more efficient than an ordinary public school Sixth, which is commonly selected partly for other attributes. It was by virtue of the reasonable principle of choosing officers solely for the work in hand, that Loretto escaped entirely those periods of disorganisation of which Mr. Hughes has given us a specimen in the Flashman episode in *Tom Brown*, and which are apt to occur when the natural rulers of house or school are not its official rulers, and the governing capacity in the community of boys is not duly represented in the governing body.

Among Loretto prefects the head-boy had unusual power. Until the creation of the office of vicegerent he was a more important person than any master. The Head was in constant communication with him upon everything

that concerned the welfare of the School, and reposed in him an absolute trust. Upon one occasion, when the vicergerent was absent from illness, the School-house was left in the head-boy's charge for a fortnight, during which time everything proceeded with the utmost regularity.

The heads of bedrooms were selected with the same care as guided the choice of prefects, and with a like singleness of aim. There were, in the Head's time, no fixed houses at Loretto, boys being shifted from the School-house to the 'Barracks,' the 'Garrison,' or the Linkfield houses, or from any one of the houses to any other, according to convenience. The number of boys in the rooms of all houses varied from one to twelve. There was, therefore, an exceptional opportunity for meeting various requirements, for breaking up unpromising sets, and making suitable combinations. As there were no studies at Loretto, more use was made of the bedrooms than at many schools. The question of room-mates thus engaged unusual attention. It was work of this kind that Almond considered the most important work about a school. He kept it always in his own hands, and consulted much about it with boys and parents and masters. The heads of bedrooms, once selected, were given the most solemn charge, often by letter, of the discipline and morals of their rooms. About twenty-five boys, varying in age from twelve to seventeen, were thus associated with the government of the School.

Last among functionaries it remains that I should mention the heads of class-rooms. It is unnecessary to set forth the ordinary duties of these officers. Are they not written in the *Book of Loretto Rules*? In addition to more formal tasks they have, it would seem, a paternal function as to games. 'The head-boy of each form,' says the notice in the *Public School Year-Book*, 'has also to see that every boy learns to play at fives, and to hold a cricket-ball, and to drop a goal.' Some of these heads of forms were very little boys, but not on that account, as the following pleasant song shows, the less resolute in the assertion of authority:—

SONG OF THE NYPERIAN KING.*

Spurn not my ord'ring call
 With scorn affected!
 Nor treat my stature small
 As unrespected!
 My place commands for me
 A certain right to be
 At least respected.
 All in! all in!

When my supremest will
 Commands you to be still,
 Or in the midst of din
 I cry "All in!"
 You surely must obey,
 And that without delay,
 Else you shall early feel
 My sore displeasure. . . .

With the several groups of the School officers thus described the Head kept in the closest touch. 'Trust coupled with intimate knowledge' was his formula of successful school management, and it is probable that there has never been a school in which trust has been carried so far. As has been elsewhere mentioned, there were no such things as roll-calls, lock-ups, or barred windows at Loretto. In wet weather runs—and no weather was too bad for us to face—boys were not herded along the road in packs to prevent shirking, but went each at his own pace. Personal belief in the value of hardy habits and loyalty to the School standard of honour took us round Falside. A head-boy in the 'seventies' made a rope-ladder, and, attaching it to his bedroom window, used it during the day as a short cut to the orchard. The Head espying the ladder, requested that it might be made a fixture, and so it remained until a year or two ago, when the room passed into the occupation of a master who was satisfied with a more usual method of egress.

These generous applications of the principle of trust could never have maintained themselves but for the 'intimate

* Or head of the 'Nippers.' The 'Nippers' are the boys in the lowest Form of the School.

knowledge' with which they were associated. The Head had a wonderful faculty of reading a boy. He could tell by a hundred little indications whether things were right or wrong. 'In chapel one Sunday evening, just as the service began,' writes a Lorettonian, 'Sullivan and I were smiling. As the Head glanced round we both became very solemn. After chapel the Head went up to Sullivan, and said: "I don't think you were behaving well in chapel to-night, Sullivan." "Why, Head?" "Because you seemed far too solemn when I looked at you."' In more important cases his inferences were as shrewd. He seemed to know by instinct when there was mischief in the air. 'There's something wrong in Letter ——' he would say on such occasions. 'I'll hae to be speirin'.'

With regard to all the graver instances of wrong-doing he acted upon a principle which has gained but a limited acceptance in the practice of schools. He aimed at destroying in the minds of his pupils the influence of the idea that telling is peaching. This criminal theory of schoolboy honour dies hard, but until it is put down, there is no security for the morals of a school. On the contrary, the school is a kind of Camorra, informally associated for the protection of vice. At Loretto the various functionaries whom I have mentioned were, of course, pledged to inform the Head if grave immorality occurred; but even in the case of boys not in authority such a practice became traditional, at least in the upper school. The success with which the Head thus associated the boys with himself in the task of guarding their own honour united with his own vigilance and wisdom and power in creating and maintaining, in the difficult conditions of boarding-school life, a standard of purity which was probably unique. This result was not immediately achieved. It was a number of years before Almond realised the nature of boyish temptations and the best ways of meeting them. Even after he had organised the School against the introduction of immorality it is not pretended that there were no periods of declension. A knot of bad boys might get together. A head of a room, in an extreme case perhaps even a

perfect, might be false to his trust. But, for the most part, mischief was kept within narrow limits, and, even within these limits, could never long maintain itself.

There was but one province of the delicate art of managing boys which the Héad had no gift for. He was a supremely bad detective. In those sad instances of stealing or forgery which occur at every school he was apt to exhibit an incapacity surprising to men who looked at character with a different eye. The generous optimism which in less morbid fields of conduct formed, as has been observed, a main part of his power, was apt to mislead him in cases where the springs of motive were themselves corrupted. The quickness of his imagination, again, led him too far. He would leap to faulty conclusions from premises which were but ill assured. Thus he landed himself at times in difficulties from which not even his ability and good faith could gracefully extricate him.

Before leaving the subject of school government a word should be said with regard to the system of punishments. The Head's objections on the score of health to the penalty of impositions has already been mentioned. The enormous development of this punishment at some of the public schools he considered a serious abuse. In general, there was not much punishment of any kind at Loretto in connection with class teaching. But so long as the two hours reserved for daily exercise were respected, punishment by repeated or extra lesson was not forbidden at Loretto, and, in later years, was to a certain extent used. For ordinary transgressions the usual punishment was corporal, and administered on the back, or on that part of the person which our pious fathers, according to the scheme of Paley, held to have been specially designed by Providence for such contingencies. Of corporal punishments there were two kinds, switching and caning. The former, as has been mentioned, was considered highly disgraceful. It was reserved for grave offences, such as thieving, or lying, or gross bullying, and could only be inflicted by the Headmaster. Of the wisdom of this form of punishment the Head became more and more doubtful. But he was never able

to disuse it, as the far crueller penalty of expulsion seemed to be the only alternative. For petty offences, such as unpunctuality and breach of ordinary rules, the usual punishment was caning. It was administered by the Headmaster, by masters, or by prefects, in the two latter cases with the option of an appeal to the Headmaster.

Of the propriety of this mode of punishment Almond was entirely convinced. He had no sympathy with the soft humanitarianism which shudders at the thought of inflicting pain, and ridiculed the precocious and overstrained sentiment of honour which renders corporal punishment impossible in France. Yet if, as occasionally happened, a Loretto boy shared the French view, it was characteristic of the spirit of his government that he respected the feeling, and substituted some other penalty. In general, however, we had so such ideas, but felt, on the contrary, as the Head himself observed, 'an honest pride in not moving a muscle, and going laughing to our seats even after a well laid on six.' This pleasant way of taking a licking met with the Head's approval. 'The great thing about corporal punishments,' he writes, 'is that they should be entirely good-humoured.' He was himself in the habit of asking boys whom he had been obliged to thrash whether he had hurt them. If the culprit had the imprudence or bravado to answer 'not much,' he laid himself out on the next occasion to correct a failure. But if the boy answered in the affirmative, 'Poor old chap!' the Head would say, as he took his arm, 'but I'm jolly glad.' In my own opinion some of the corporal punishment at Loretto might with advantage have been exchanged for 'punishment drill.' The Head's argument that it made boys hate what he would wish them to like does not apply to all the forms of that harmless but deterrent discipline. But the Head's enthusiasm for hardiness and fortitude led him to value corporal punishment for its own sake. 'I cannot make out,' he used to say, 'why people should think it a bad thing for their boys to learn to bear a little pain.' He regarded it as one of the worst features in his own school-training that it had exempted him from the

discipline of the rod. Not, indeed, that he ever punished a boy, or permitted him to be punished, needlessly. The courage of his opinion did not carry him to the heights of the Spartan discipline. But since it must needs be that offences should come, he considered it a happy thing that British common-sense had hit upon a penalty which, in an effeminate age, had an educational value of its own. It is the merit of corporal punishment that it is brief. When all has been said, it is probable that there was not a boarding-school in the country where life was so little oppressed by pains and penalties as at Loretto.

Almond's relations with the parents of Loretto boys were singularly happy. On one occasion, indeed, when difficulties had arisen, he remarked confidentially to one of them: 'Between you and me and the poker, Mrs. F., parents are the very devil'; but, in general, he was almost as successful with them as with the boys. This result was due, in large measure, to the habitual care and courtesy of his communications with them. He never wrote them those crushing letters, so admirable from the literary point of view, so disastrous from the politic, which at times surprise us in the pages of Thring's biography. He thoroughly understood, and habitually respected, maternal sensitiveness. 'A woman will sometimes attack her own offspring,' he remarks, 'but if you attack him, all her feathers are up.' There was a sympathy in the tone of his remonstrances which made it impossible to resent them. Not that he was ever lax. He was the first Scottish headmaster to insist on parents respecting the rules of the School. He was in the habit, he tells us, of resisting parents for their sons' good, and one of the duties he used to urge upon brother headmasters was the duty of 'educating the parents.' 'I must get hold of the woman some day,' he writes of a certain foolish mother, 'and speak kindly daggers to her, and show her how she spoils her boys. For I believe she has their good at her weak heart.'

The success of Almond's dealings with parents owed much to the resourcefulness of his intellect. If he failed on one line of argument, he was always ready with another.

Mr. Marzials supplies an amusing instance of this characteristic. A Loretto parent was anxious that his son should quit the classical for the science side of the School. The Head was opposed to the change, and dilated on the unique value of a classical training, the literary taste which it conferred, the love of Shakspeare and good authors which it bred, and so forth. 'But, Head,' the parent interrupted, 'I've no literary taste. I can't read Shakspeare. No more will my son.' 'Ah!' said our Master at once. 'I see I shall have to take lower ground.'

Single-hearted persons are seldom misunderstood. If to single-heartedness they add a high degree of ability, they are apt to win a privileged position. It was strange to observe how men of affairs made allowance in Almond's case for an eccentricity which they would scarcely have tolerated in another man. 'He is a wonderful fellow, that old Headmaster of yours,' a well-known Queen's Counsel once remarked to me. 'I went down to see him the other day about my boy, and found him in his study, dressed in a pair of old white flannel trousers and a grey flannel shirt. My son was just at the winning or losing when I sent him to Loretto, but Almond got hold of him at once. He talked with me for an hour about the boy in the most admirable fashion, and when it was time for my train, accompanied me, just as he was, to the station. When we parted, I looked after him to see what he would be at. He had set off at a dead run down the road. Quite mad, one could see, but he saved my boy.'

To parents who really understood the Head, his eccentricity added an element of pleasure to the thought of meeting him. One of the last times I went down to see him, I met such a parent, mother of a Loretto boy, bent on a like errand. We entered by the gate at North Esk Lodge, and, as we passed towards the voices in the garden, there came out by the kitchen doorway a well-known figure, in a flannel shirt and trousers, red braces dangling against its slippered heels, a steaming pot in its hands. It hailed us without the least embarrassment. 'Ah, Mrs. —, delighted to see you! My dear Bob, do take that horrid

black coat off, to please me! You find me boiling my pipe.' There was no touch of pose in the Head's eccentricity. It sprang naturally from the sincerity and originality of his own mind. Most men unconsciously choose the usual. He was always in quest of the reasonable. In the instance above quoted he had just risen from his afternoon siesta, and as his pipe needed boiling, proceeded to boil it, and to empty the hot water at the back door, without a thought of callers. Conventional and unhumorous people were shocked at such proceedings. But conventional and unhumorous persons rarely sent their sons to Loretto. It is by a process of natural selection that the *clientèle* of every school is arranged.

In the families of Loretto boys the Head was, for the most part, a sort of standing toast. Parents vied with their boys in laughing at him and admiring him; and if at times annoyance mingled with the admiration, it seldom outlived it. It is difficult for a parent to be really angry with a headmaster of supreme ability who is sincerely devoted to the interests of his boy. Almond's differences with parents were like lovers' quarrels, soon made up.

His relations with his masters, on the other hand, were by no means so fortunate, and to this many causes contributed. His attitude towards the ordinary lesson-system of the School has been already explained. It necessarily threw him into a certain antagonism with his staff. The freedom, again, with which, to secure some moral or physical gain for the boys, he would alter the usual arrangement of hours occasioned much annoyance. He considered that the length of school holidays made it reasonable that, during the terms, masters should be entirely at the service of the School. The Loretto time-table, therefore, was not the hard-and-fast routine it is elsewhere. 'If my wife has a pat-ball party in the afternoon,' he writes, 'and I want afternoon work, the pat-ball has to give way.' He expected a similar acquiescence on the part of members of the staff. It was, however, an irritating thing for a master who had plans for Saturday evening to learn from his boys at first lesson that in consequence of the state of the weather 'Saturday had become

Tuesday,' and that he must cancel his engagements. The Head's absent-mindedness, and not infrequent failure to give masters timely warning when a change of hours had been effected was another source of friction. A system of 'communicators,' that is, of boys responsible for informing masters, was introduced. But the memories of boys are not better than those of headmasters, and the grievance was never completely redressed.

Nor did the friendliness of the Head's attitude to his colleagues reconcile the more sensitive among them to the freedom with which he discussed them with the boys. It was only a man of much humour and simplicity of character who could approve of his action in a case quoted by Mr. Little: 'Head once asked me what I thought of a certain master; and I discreetly said I knew nothing about him. Whereupon the Head explained that the man in question had come to him, told him he had a chance of bettering his position, and asked him for a letter of recommendation. Head had replied that, as he had been away a good deal lately, he was not in a position to criticise his teaching one way or the other. Then a bright idea struck him: he would ask all the boys who came in contact with Mr. So-and-So's teaching what they thought of him, and, according to their answers, so would the letter be.' With ideas of personal dignity which condemned such a procedure the Head had no sympathy. He aimed in all things at making Loretto a Palace of Truth. Nor had he much belief in studying the idiosyncrasies of a colleague if they seemed to him unreasonable. I remember once saying to him, in reference to a master to whom he had given offence, that it might be well 'not to tread upon Mr. So-and-So's toes.' He replied that he had always observed that 'if one avoided treading upon the toes of touchy people, their toes grew longer and longer.'

On the other hand, he did much to cultivate pleasant relations with his staff. But the strength of his desire to do so, and his extreme dislike of finding fault with those who were working for him, led him to neglect that close supervision and constant criticism which all but the best masters

require. There was thus too little commendation for faithful work, and, for long periods, too little censure of slackness, until at length a master, originally promising enough, might become impossible, and have to leave. The 'Captain's' case was an instance of this in early days. There were several others.

Nor was it to be expected that masters, trained under very different systems, should readily understand his ideas. English public school and university men (and the large majority of Loretto masters, after 1875 or thereabouts, were of this class) have many virtues, but rarely the grace of quick intellectual sympathy. 'There is hardly any class of men so bigoted,' cried Almond once at a period when relations with the staff were strained, 'so like Popish priests at the time of the Reformation, as the ordinary public school and 'varsity men.' At times, no doubt, he had to deal with colleagues who had not yet lost that conceit which some might consider to be the one unfailing gift of a university. Such persons caused him much tribulation, and were sure to misunderstand him. But, in general, he complained that masters were more touchy, and paltry, and less public-spirited than boys.

The exceptional nature, again, of his own abilities in the management of boys rendered it hard for him to sympathise with the disciplinary difficulties of less gifted men. In those quarrels between masters and boys which it is a headmaster's most difficult work to reconcile, he was naturally prejudiced against the master. If the latter adopted an infallible attitude, the prejudice was confirmed. 'In my own quarrels with boys,' he would say to an angry colleague, 'I have almost always been in the wrong. You should consider the probability of your being so in the present instance.' Such appeals did not always meet with the success they deserved. On the other hand, the closeness of his own relations with the boys, and the extent to which he depended on the more important of them for the maintenance of all he most valued in school life, made it unusually hard for him to exercise, in the cases we are considering, official discipline upon them. In the family circumstances of Loretto life, he refused to do

what headmasters of large public schools are sometimes obliged to do, viz. to punish, in the interest of the general discipline, boys who have been more sinned against than sinning. Masters used to complain that they met with inadequate support. In some instances, their dissatisfaction was justified.

Whether for the reasons we have stated or for other causes, a number of men, during the forty years of Almond's headmastership, left Loretto with bitter thoughts of him in their hearts. How many of these same masters, when experience had disciplined their characters, and a larger knowledge of school life had shown them the rare quality of Almond's work, looked back to Loretto as a place of sweet conditions, a home of happy memories! Yet it was so, in large measure, for this very reason, that Almond encouraged the departure of masters who were out of sympathy with the spirit of the place. If it be permitted to borrow a word from the Bishop of Oxford, he could not endure 'accidie' in his colleagues. Cynicism, effeminacy, and envious, sneering radicalism were also *taboo*. Masters who exemplified these failings were seldom long at Loretto. In his manner of arranging for such cases he was generous and considerate, but his policy with regard to them was always decided. He thus avoided that grave evil in schools when, from the weakness or inability of the headmaster, disaffected members are retained upon the staff. It is upon this point that some of the ablest principals have made shipwreck. Almond's uniform practice in the matter must be regarded as among the strongest merits of his government.

The return of old boys as masters to the School, and the appointment of old boys as vicegerents, removed most of the difficulties between Almond and his colleagues. Even before the advent of his former pupils I should give a wrong impression if I hinted that the friction that existed was greater than at most schools. The relation between an assistant master and a headmaster is like the case of a man with his mother-in-law. It is perhaps the most difficult juxtaposition which professional life has to offer. Nor is it possible to eliminate the chief causes of friction. They are

inherent in the relation itself. The headmaster's opinion of his colleagues is the dominant consideration for most members of his staff. It requires a humility rare in men who have succeeded both at school and college to admit the justice of his view, should that opinion prove unfavourable. Thus the mere assignment of offices and promotions has a tendency to embroil a headmaster with his staff. Yet it is impossible for him, by any exercise of patronage within his power, to remove what is perhaps the most unfortunate feature of the situation, namely, that, except at the great schools, where some twenty per cent. of the masters are in possession of lucrative houses, there is scarcely a member of a public school staff who is not making a smaller income than his father made before him. The headmaster, of course, is in no way responsible for this unpleasant fact, but he experiences the evil effects of it as surely as a Government suffers for bad trade.

Again, for the success of schools of the English type there must reside in the headmaster an autocracy of power. But the independence of British temper endures autocracy with difficulty. In most cases the best that can be hoped is that the staff should resemble a high-spirited and restive steed, backed by a bold and skilful rider. Not, indeed, that the comparison is always appropriate. Conservative headmasters, who are content to reap the harvest of the past and ignore the claims of the future, may have an easier course. But those who look beyond the present hour, whose term of service is something more than a ministry of affairs, in a word, who have ideas, must expect a rough ride. They make demands upon the loyalty and labour of their staffs which only a kindred enthusiasm can satisfy. They are the idols of the few; but in proportion to the originality of their ideas is the gradually accumulating disaffection of many. In most of the lives which have built up English education this result has been verified. It is difficult to speak with certainty of Dr. Arnold's Rugby experience. This is one of a number of points in which Stanley's *Life* leaves much to be desired. But the collegiate conflicts of Dr. Thring at Uppingham, and Dr. Benson of Wellington

are writ large on the pages of their biographies. Compared with the contentions of these gladiators, Almond's relations with his colleagues were tranquil and serene. To this result, as has been above mentioned, his wise policy of sending disaffection, and even incompatibility, about its business with a kindly-worded testimonial in its pocket, and, in the latter half of his term, the interposition between him and the staff of a judicious and all-enduring vicegerent, contributed much.

But there was another cause which has not yet been referred to in this connection, to wit, the charm of his casual intercourse with his masters, and the extent to which he met them in his own house in a friendly, informal way. It is in his 'happier hour of social pleasure' that we would take leave of him in this chapter—the hour of pipes, the hour of toddy, a modest, most modest beaker of the same. It is ten of a winter's evening. The whist-table is set at North Esk Lodge. But the Head still stands with his colleagues by the fire, the light from the gas-jet behind him silvering his grey hair and beard. He is talking brilliantly of a hundred things, interrupted often by loud protests from the younger men. You can see him hopping from one foot to the other as he darts a repartee, and dancing with merriment at each point that tells. No! no! They will never persuade him that the Ulster men won't fight, that engineers are not among the chief enemies of the human race, that the l.b.w. rule should be allowed to stand. But this is not the time for flying talk. Last night he held bad cards. To-night let A—— and B—— beware! It is the time for serious whist, whist that brings balm to jaded intellects, whist that unruffles all the creases of the day. The room has fallen suddenly silent, and by us also enough has been said. Let us go quietly out into the night, and leave them to their game!

CHAPTER XV

LETTERS ILLUSTRATIVE OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS

OF the many questions which engage the attention of the biographer few are so difficult as the treatment of letters. Their insertion in the text (except very occasionally) is apt to interfere with the sequence of the writer's paragraphs. If attached to individual chapters, they are scarcely less disturbing to the general connection of the work. To place them at the end of the book is to produce something of the nature of an anti-climax. To omit them altogether is, in most cases, to sacrifice a valuable source of illustration. It is in the hope of avoiding, so far as may be, these various disadvantages that I propose, in this instance, to include the main body of the letters in two separate chapters, the first of these illustrating that part of the book which is already written, and the second the portion which remains. In both cases letters will be arranged according to subject rather than date, and will be prefaced by short headings or introductions, which will be printed in italics.

Here follows an Oxford letter. The 'Marion' referred to is, of course, Mrs. Weaver, who had just been abandoned by her husband. Who the 'expected inmate' was cannot now be known—some friend of the family, no doubt. It is instructive to find that at this period the Head had some interest in the fair sex after all. His lifelong hatred of official pedantry comes out in the Crimean reference.

TO MISS MARY ALMOND, Fairley Lodge, Torquay.

'BALLIOL COLLEGE,
'OXFORD, February 15, 1855.

'MY DEAR PRODGERS,—The sound of that old familiar name reminds me that I haven't written to its owner this

term. Exqueege my neglect. Things here are going on serenely. The river is skatable all about; some adventurous spirits tried to skate to town the other day, but they didn't get more than twenty miles down. For my own part, I am not very keen about skating far out of bounds. I like going where there have been plenty before us, as there have been several immersions from going on places just frozen over which look beautiful smooth ice. Luckily none of them have been out of depth. Near Oxford, however, the current is not very strong, and the ice is many inches thick. They are going to roast a sheep on it. Is Torbay frozen over yet? I am sorry to hear no better accounts of papa; but as I suppose it isn't quite Indian heat even with you, I dare say he is better where he is than running about in all the draughts of the house.

'I was really very sorry to hear about poor Marion. Somehow or other I had always had an idea that the man was a "scamp," as papa delights to call that sort of ginleman. In fact, I suppose it was evident *a priori* that he was either that or a puppy, which is rather the more odious character of the two; but either way he was sure to lead his poor wife to grief. I can only hope she is consoled by his utter worthlessness. If she would look at the matter rationally, she would see that she has nothing more to grieve over than, first, her own misguided judgment (as anybody's may be) in being taken in by him, and, secondly, her not being able to marry again with somebody worthy of her. Anyway her obligation to love, honour, and obey him is utterly done away with by his own breach of the marriage contract. I am sorry to hear she won't hear anything against him. She ought to loathe, detest, and avoid him, till death do happily put him out of the way. Excuse my ignorance of the matrimonial etiquette, if I have said anything that hadn't ought to have been said on such an occasion, but it seems to me that such cases are more for indignation than pity.

'In the meantime, what is poor Marion going to do? I suppose resuming her old place with you is out of the question. I must confess I can hardly see why. She has nothing to be ashamed of. When does she come to you?

And as to the other expected inmate, when does she come to you? As to those dangers which might cross the mind of an habitual novel reader (though, luckily for the world, life is not a novel), I probably shan't see her at all, as she goes away in June. So I'm curious to hear a little more than I have heard, the sum of that being her name, which I forget; an insinuation that she ranks among her very great-grandpapas both Shem and Japheth; and, thirdly, that she won't eat one, as children are told of people they aren't to be afraid of. Query, is she tall? Query, is she chatty? Query, is she giggly, young-ladyish, superior, or blue? Query, is she engaged? Apply your measuring line to test her height, your barometer to test her heaviness in conversation, your scales to test her gravity of deportment, your thermometer for her warmth of disposition, your hydrometer for her sentimentality, and your cyanometer for her learning, and let me have the statistics.

'Well, really I must be bringing this to a close, as I want to go and read, a thing I have been rather guiltless of, I am sorry to say, for the last few days. I generally tea-dinner in my rooms with Arnold, who is at Mason's also. This very often ensures reading afterwards, not always though. Last night I was settling down when a man came in who was invalided from Varna, and so my reading ended in hearing a good deal of chitchat about the campaign, as far as he went in it, and also old College gossip, as he took his degree at Balliol the term I came up; item, in our both performing the usual functions of chimneys during the time, especially he. I have taken to pipes now. They are an infinitude cheaper, and all real smokers like them better.

'It is a great comfort to be free from toothache, which I am perfectly sure it is smoking keeps off—not that I smoke very much, or ever shall.

'This man quite confirms the utter incompetency and recklessness shown, even at Varna. Imprimis, the spot they encamped on was known by the name of the 'Valley of Death.' One regiment, he told us, was encamped on a most pestilential spot. The doctors went to the authorities and told them that a few hundred yards farther off was a

much healthier place, and that if they stayed where they were, it was certain death. Not an inch would those murderers move till some scores of soldiers had been carried off by cholera. What is murder, if this isn't? If it is a capital crime to kill one man from some powerful motive such as revenge or starvation, what is it to kill scores to gratify petty official dignity?

'This man, by the bye, is brother to "Heartsease" and "The Heir of Redclyffe."'

'Good-bye, with best love to all.'

A letter of the Merchiston period.

TO MISS MARY ALMOND.

'GASKBEG, LAGGAN, 1860.

'MY DEAR PRODGRS,—I got here all right on Wednesday without any remarkable adventures. It is seven miles from Dalwhinnie at the head of Loch Ericht, and on the river Spey about eleven miles from Kingussie, so you can find the place on a map. Also about one and a half miles from Cluny Macpherson. The advantages of the place are—plenty of fishing, a most beautiful neighbourhood, and very central for going to different places, rabbit and snipe shooting, and remarkably comfortable quarters. Also use of a machine (free gratis) whenever I want it. Campbell drove me to Loch Laggan (seven miles) on Friday, and I fished the river there, getting two dozen, about three to a pound, so good-sized trout. I stayed at Loch Laggan Inn that night, a most mean-looking little place, but where they know how to charge, in fact to impose most frightfully.

'Friday night there was, as there has been every second day for the last few months, a "spate" which swelled the river to an unfishable size; and the loch was too stormy. I drove back to a farm about half-way, where Campbell was to meet me; and behold, I was astonished at being shown into an "elegantly" furnished drawing-room with two young ladies, at least intended for such. However, one of them had come out in the rain to help me with my things, and

they both helped in bringing in supper and toddy, so I must not complain of the young lady element. And what a specimen of a farmer! A rubicund, hearty giant, exactly (what I never saw before) the ideal John Bull farmer, only not so stupid; and offering shooting, hospitality—everything but his daughter (and for that I didn't ask). I dare say you wonder at everything being so *couleur de rose*, but one's digestion is wonderful in the Highlands. So must have been that of the pair of Highland horses whom Campbell drove in one day to Fort William and back, 76 miles! I never knew horseflesh could do so much as that.

'I only met one old Merchistonian in my travels. He was going to St. Andrews, but I have no doubt I shall fall in with more people I know going back.

'I have taken no moths, though one night I was up a swampy hillside about a mile from here sugaring. I have, however, got lots of caterpillars by beating birch-trees (an operation in which you will say they are not usually passive).

'You may remember my writing to one of the Tennents in some alarm about his not coming back. There was a letter awaiting me here informing me that he was. If he and his brother had gone, we would have lost all this year's eleven but one: now we have three of the best staying. I shall have some trouble about the cricket-ground when I get back. Harvey has allowed cows on the field. However, he says they were necessary to eat the grass, the sheep not sufficing, and the grass is really rank with the continued rains of this summer. It used to be very scanty. Did I tell you that Mrs. Harvey has had a little girl?

'Didn't I get a lecture from Mrs. Neish? She found a £1 note of mine in a drawer. Not so bad though as Professor Lushington, who (Harvey informs me) left quantities of £1 notes in an open basket in a closet when Harvey was taking his duties. Mrs. Neish had also a little more money of mine, as I had left some with her to pay any bills that might come in. She tells me she might rob me fearfully. It would do me a great deal of good to be with

a dishonest person for some time. There was Mrs. Primrose at Musselburgh, and Mrs. Neish at Merchiston, and Mrs. Weaver most of my life—enough to spoil one for taking care of anything of one's own.

'Now do take care of yourself, my precious Prodggers, and try to cultivate habits of order and economy, particularly in little things. "Take care of the 'airs, and the wigs 'ull look after theirselves," as the hairdresser said to his assistant.

'My feelings towards mamma and Ellen are unchanged since I left home, and till further notice.

'Tell Marion there is no place like the Highlands—eggs 6d. a dozen, butter 14d.'

A letter referring to early struggles at Loretto.

TO JAMES ANNAN, Croydon.

'NORTH ESK LODGE,

'MUSSELBURGH, *January, 9, 1902.*

' . . . Yes, I always want to build a good gymnasium. But remember I began in 1862 without a yard, a brick, or a sovereign (my mother lived with me and had a fair income), twelve small boys, and a rent of £400; and knowing nobody, it was ten years before I had an income, having been nearly bankrupt and saved by some parents who got to know it. Since then I have bought, drained, and largely built the place and all appurtenances, besides setting two cricket-grounds in order, etc., etc. Our sanatorium cost £1100. Now, I still have about £2000 to pay to clear the property of debt (I once owed £13,000), and must build a house for Mr. Tristram. Fortunately my fishery business has paid most of my sporting expenses, which have been life to me. Therefore the new gymnasium still waits by the Pool of Siloam. Lately the building and equipment of our science department has been a big and more necessary business, and we are just about to add a new laboratory.

'It has been an uphill pull, building up a public school from nothing.'

Family Letters.

TO HIS ELDEST SON, GEO, at Oxford (on the occasion of his coming of age).

‘INVERAN, Feb. 18, 1898.

‘MY DEAREST GEO,—Dreadful day Sunday—Daddy has no power to lick you by then, and you could have him up if he did. Don’t you feel awfully cocky about yourself now?

‘Bumping John’s is nothing to having a right to vote, and be an M.P., and beat your wife, if you have one, with a thin switch.

‘But are you married? I ask out of sheer curiosity, for I have no further right to interfere. But I would like just to have a look at her, and tell you whether I want an introduction.

‘There was a snow spate when I came, but I have now five fish, one this morning and three yesterday.

‘Is Crosfield in University torpid?—I beg pardon, togger? But these er-ers will creep in, such a doited old fosser is your dadder!

‘Are you going to give champagne breakfast on the great day? Or by what other act of folly will you signalise it?

‘I don’t believe I ever came of age at all. At least, I don’t remember it. I rather think I was born an old fossil. But I am sure I didn’t give a champagne breakfast. Yes, let me see, now. I was at Amulree on a reading party; and one of them had an amatory cipher correspondence in the advertisement column of the *Times*, and as he also was born when grouse die, my sisters suspected it was I. I won’t suspect you, old fellow, I promise you.—Your loving but most antiquated

DADDER.’

Letters illustrating his life in the Highlands.

TO MISS ALMOND.

‘OVERSCAIG, August 5, 1863.

‘MY DEAR PRODGRS,—Here’s a genuine Highland place, close to Loch Shin, 16 miles from Lairg, which is sort

of half civilised. Here there is nothing but a very little inn, and a forester's house, hills, and loch : no fields, or walls, or people. Now isn't that jolly? I have just had a dip in the loch, and breakfast, and am going out to fish. We got here yesterday evening.

'Last week I had a bad cold, which when I went to bed on Sunday evening seemed getting worse. *Therefore* I was up at 2.30 on Monday morning, breakfasted at 3 (a mail came in then, so the people were up), and then started for a loch about 5 miles off, where we were till 2 o'clock. My cold was cured! Really, I believe the east wind, rain, and wading combined did it.'

TO CHARLES RUSSELL, (O.L.)* (then an Undergraduate at Oxford).

'NORTH ESK LODGE,
'MUSSELBURGH, *January 5, 1893.*

'DEAR CHARLIE,—It was a great joy to get your letter. I withdraw "dilettante." I think I don't quite know the meaning of the word. Thanks awfully. I'd like it when there. But I bar travelling. Except in my long fishing absences, I can only manage three days at a time.

I say, Christmas is the best time for the Highlands. I went with — and —, of course did Duchery, and then went to Blair Atholl, had some grand walks, and celebrated Christmas Day by getting 3500 feet up on Ben-y-Gloe. It was simply glorious. Such a view of snowy hills, and so clear. We did a far peak, not the one you see from the line, about twenty miles in all, and it felt like six in that air. How we pitied the poor creatures crawling along pavements in smooth clothes and fine linen! Ugh!

'Enclosed is an interesting letter from Butcher on the Homeric point. Send it back. It's delightful to think there is one man who may not think me an utter Philistine. Turn up the place,† and see how this argument holds. The

* Here and elsewhere O.L. stands for Old Lorettonian.—R. J. M.

† See *Odyssey*, xxii. 143.—R. J. M.

same difficulty applies wherever Melanthius got out. Now he was a goat-herd, and therefore, being on a rocky island, very agile: in fact, I believe he was President of the Ithaca Mountaineering Club. Now mark how Eumaeus and Co. served him when they caught him upstairs with the armour. They "hoisted him and left him there." There's climbing for you, my man. This all fits with my theory of the *ῥῶγες*, which I take to be high holes near the hearth, in a recess formed by its projecting wall and the inner wall of the hall, up to which he had clambered, and the suitors could not.

'I think there is far too much drinking and eating at Oxford. When I was there, I never once saw champagne. I think the battle of Dorking would be a good thing for us, but I would like to found Loretto first. Do come whenever you can. I just long to see you again.

'Six new boys or perhaps seven.—Your loving

'HEAD.'

TO HIS WIFE, written from Drumruinie.

'PARADISE, *June 13, '97.*

'... Where shall I begin? At Strathan after I lost Kirkaig, spirit of unhappiness used to seize me about beginning of August. It was partly the malarious ooze. But when the height of excitement was occasional Dog Loch, or waiting till yacht came round, N.W. wind having sprung up meanwhile, it was not good enough.

'This house is simply magnificent. So roomy. No necessity for piling anything. Mrs. D. is struck with wonder at the tidiness of the boys—it's easy to be tidy here. Hot and cold water abundantly, for bath. Loads of novels in drawing-room. Piano in good order.

'But Loch Ganiach!!! The author of Genesis ii. didn't know it, or he wouldn't have made a river without ever a loch. You leave the road where we had the nasty bread. Two miles over between Stack and Coulbeg—Stack with its marvellous red-throat and crown of thorns, Coulbeg just

like a steep pyramid, blown to rents and bulges with dynamite—and then, facing you, the tremendous red southern range of Coulmore. The Greeks would have made it their Olympus, or rather they would have made it Zeus himself, and had a story that it had been his coffin, and that he had risen and turned it into stone. Then behind you, these eight fantastic peaks of Ben More Coygach, with no family likeness—one round, broken, and tipsy; another looking drunk; another like a bad tooth; and then one or two more peering over the drunkard's shoulders to see who you are. Two great companies of hinds feeding on Coulbeg. Then birchy glades, and then the loch like a cool foot-bath for the great gods to bathe their feet in. It seemed profane to fish in it. I hadn't left home till two P.M. (Greek and Latin, and odds and ends), so it was near four before I cast a fly. Soon two. Then they came short, but oh what boils! Then a third. About 7.30, twenty, nothing over a pound—down to one I think as small as $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. I never saw such a yellow as some of them are—not at all æsthetic. I would like to show one to Jenkinson, and say 'Now, you fool, do you understand?' And their gameness! Why, one of six ounces runs you as if he was a real fish. My gillie had four miles to go after this, and I knew that horses were in waiting. So, reluctantly, I rose just one more—bigger than any I had.

'I came back to find Jack looking so proud and lovely in his new tails, and Bob in "bummy" and white waistcoat. I was chill, and tired, and a bit squeasy (all away now), and they were at the sweets. So I sat down all flannelly, and apologised to Miss D., when I saw her, and she to me, for she hadn't meant to show herself in coquettish (coquess means cook) costume, but had to, because girls were stupid. And our first frizzly was badly cooked, and we had another; and we sat chatty, and brilliantly happy till after 12; and then oh!—I slept. . . .

'P.S.—I think Geo might like description of Ganieach. I rather fancied it. I seldom write a description which I do fancy.'

TO PROFESSOR G. G. RAMSAY, 6 The College, Glasgow.

‘NORTH ESK LODGE,
‘MUSSELBURGH, *April 23, 1898.*

‘You will, I know, be glad to hear that my fulmination against the present Army Examinations is to appear in June, as far as an editor can promise anything.

‘Please give me as much notice as you can before you come to Drumruinie. Of course you will bring with you the son who held his father hanging by a rope on Soolbhein (I always like to be in the fashion, so I give you a new spelling quite as good as Vergil—how I do loathe that “e” fashion yet!), and you will find your host and progeny “tieless and hatless,” also usually barefoot in the house. I came down on my eldest girl for running barefoot in the long grass—by reason of adders. But I think that you will really be very much amused to hear that we do dress for 8.30 P.M. dinner. I found that boys with me liked it, and it’s very nice after a whole day in flannels, “tieless and hatless,” when there is a warm bath, and somewhat ampler surroundings than at Strathan. So, as the Scotch laird said, “you may bring your beerials.”

‘I dare say, however, that you may like to encamp for a night or so at the Iron House on Loch Skinaskink. It is at the finest point of view I know in Scotland, and there are more places where you could be smashed to atoms within a few miles than I know anywhere else.

‘You are not to convert any of my children, actual or foster, out of my Salvationist * creed.’

TO MRS. M‘FARLAN, 25 Braid Avenue, Edinburgh.

‘OYKEL BRIDGE,
‘LAIRG, *August 14, 1900.*

‘. . . I was delighted to find Ella so strong. She and I had a delightful walk from Drumruinie to this place, over hills—no path, or house, or human all the way. Our

* Reckless mountaineers the Head termed ‘Ultramontanes’; cautious ones, ‘Salvationists.’—R. J. M. †

luggage went twenty-two miles by road. Only fourteen miles as the crow flies, but a good deal more as we had to hop up and down peat ditches. And we went out of our way to go up a little hill, eighteen hundred only, but very central, and such a view. Such glorious spring heather and moss, and a feast of ripe cranberries at top; and there was a gloriously cool N.E. wind (too cool for coats off—or I wouldn't be one of those maniacs whom I have seen panting and perspiring uphill on a hot day), and brisk showers whistling down on you, clothing the hills in mist, and the bright keen wind inveiling them again.

'We were seven and a half hours steady going. Biking, and afternoon teas, and starched collars, and rotting generally—oh dear! They should try our sort of thing, over hills all day, and a kettle boiling in a nook after six hours' going, and then they would know what tea and a pipe was. Believe me, a pipe is far nicer and more wholesome than cigarettes, though I've not got Ella to smoke one yet.'

Letters to Old Boys on various subjects.

TO R. J. MACKENZIE (O.L.) (at Oxford).

'LORETTO, September 14, 1877.

'... Isn't training a lot of fellows up not to go on like sheep, but to get into the habit of asking the why and wherefore of everything you do, worth more than numbers plus conformity? If, even in what you call small things, I made boys do a thing which I thought less good for them than *ignobile vulgus* might not be offended, what is the *raison d'être* of Loretto? A number of boys here for the main purpose of my making money and retiring!

'I fear your tribune would have vetoed my taking the place to begin with, and everything since which has made the School distinctive, or has a chance of making it influential.

'But I am quite satisfied with the numbers. They are quite enough, if I can turn them out infected with principles which I believe to be for the good of society.

Perhaps a larger number would be less infected, and Loretto might end in being colourless, and then I would be glad to see the place turned into a Ragged School.

‘But tell me really what might be otherwise, which keeps numbers down, without sacrificing a jot worth fighting for?’

‘. . . Put off difficulties about signing creeds in the meantime. Perhaps they will have changed some things soon, and perhaps you will come to the view of some friends of mine, that signing means “as any reasonable man can now understand them.” I can’t accept this, but some, who seem to be honest men, do.

‘To me this is evident. God has left us no doubt what we ought to do. We may be sure we are doing His will, if we live for making the world better and happier than we found it. And the narrow, self-seeking, self-indulgent man won’t bud at once into a wide-minded, large-hearted, and devoted angel. And He has not left it so clear what we are to believe, or men who earnestly seek for light would not differ so much. Item, revelation would have been made clearly to the whole world.

‘I believe that Christ did rise, and that He is Divine, and that His coming into the world is the one cause sufficient to counterbalance the down-gravitating force of human sin. But I can’t believe that right opinions about all this have any merit in the sight of God. They depend upon opportunities, early teaching, logical power, etc. Those, however, who have the blessedness of believing that He did rise are handicapped by a tremendous responsibility; and it is not the “infidel” who excites my wonder and horror so much as the average “Christian,” who plumes himself on respectability, on the one hand, and a paramount regard to the interests of his own soul, when he is engaged in devotion, or is unwell. . . .

‘I hope I haven’t been wasting our time. I know it does me good to put my thoughts on paper sometimes. Probably you are laughing at me for being *drawn* about the eccentricities.

‘When are you coming here? Of course, you are before you go back, and, of course, come when you can.

‘ So X—— is going to take orders. Where will he end ? If the Roman theory rests upon an elephant and a tortoise, the Anglican seems to me to repose on a chameleon and a jelly-fish. Did I tell you I had had some thoughts of getting Dr. Alexander and Pulsford to make me an Independent Minister ? There is no subscription, and I would feel decently and lawfully called. I don’t suppose it will come off. It would really lose influence for no adequate good, unless I were separated from the Bishop, and could get no clergy. Don’t tell X—— this. It would make him worse than he will be at the end of Lent. Which reminds me—“ We must all, my dear brethren, feel very glad that Lent is over ” said a curate in his Easter Day sermon in my wife’s hearing.

‘ Oh—I was introduced by Sanderson of Elstree to the victim of the celebrated Winchester tunding case—a nice fellow, now an Indian Civil, and be it known to all and sundry that the angry parent ended by sending his two brothers to Winchester !

‘ Did you hear I met H. Smith and Strachan Davidson of Balliol at Durness ? Great fun Smith was. I am rejoiced to find the leading Liberal member of the governing bodies of Rugby and Winchester so sound about tunding and baby scholarships. I flatter myself I knocked in a nail or two on the latter point. . . .

‘ Epitaph in Durness churchyard :

“ Siste viator iter ; jacet hic sub tegmine Domus
 Qui cecinit forma praestantes rure puellas,
 Quique vivos laeto celebravit carmine nuptos,
 Et vita functos lugubri voce deflevit ;
 Et acriter variis momordit vitia modis.”

‘ Ask Kenneth to correct it.’

To H. F. CALDWELL (O.L.) (congratulating him upon his brother, Mr. W. H. Caldwell’s, discovery of the eggs of Monotremata).

‘ STRATHAN,

‘ LOCH INVER, *September 15, 1884.*

‘ We must all be very proud of him, though it is somewhat humiliating to discover that the old serpent was right

after all, and had a title, on the patriarchal principle, to offer advice to our "first parents." But really I think I'd as soon come from a snake as from a toad, and I've a sort of idea that my own ancestor may not have been a snake after all, but some very big and worthy sort of sea monster, such as that which nobly declined to digest Jonah. But I believe that snakes, toads, and all the rest of us really have to reverence, as our still more remote ancestor, the larva of a sea squirt. Well, it's not worse than coming straight out of the dust, when we think what dust is under a microscope.

'Bill ought not to return to this country too soon, or he will be torn into shreds by a gang of infuriated Free-Kirkers. I should think some Highland pulpits will have rare bits about him, if they can get hold of the news, and sort of half understand it. "Oh my friends, and he would tell us that it was out of the serpent's loins we all came. Oh Scotland, Scotland!" *ad infinitum taediosissimum*, etc., etc.

'But do give him my very warmest congratulations when you write. I feel very proud that Loretto was the "mesoplastic ovum" of his career. . . .

'Give my love to "Beelzy," and congratulate him on the unsuspected connection of his namesake with our ancestry.'

Prefects to be selected for governing power.

TO THE EDITOR OF A NEWSPAPER.

' . . . I have known the School from which I write ruled firmly and well for several years running by its best scholars. But, at times, the only result of such a principle is the irresponsible domination of the strong and violent, with bullying, lawlessness, and worse evils than these speedily rampant. It is, in fact, as absurd to choose governors by scholarship as professors by athletics. Apart from other qualities, superior scholarship affords no presumption that a boy or man will be able to govern others.

'Equally absurd it would be to choose governors by athletics. Nor is it ever done, so far as I know. I have

known boys who were the most useful members of cricket and football teams, whom no one but a fool would have thought of putting into school office—not from any untrustworthiness, but from the absence of governing qualities in their characters.

‘There are certainly some athletic qualities which generally co-exist with governing qualities. The endurance and self-denial necessary to make a great oarsman, and the courage, dash, and initiative usually essential to a great football player, are almost always associated with qualities which make a boy respected and influential among his fellows, whereas such things as speed of foot and trickiness give no such position.

‘School offices are not given as a reward, but as a means for promoting the objects for which such offices exist, viz. the order, tone, and morality of a school.’

A letter dealing with the subject of irregular justice in schools.

TO A. M. PATERSON (O.L.) (Head of the School the previous Term).

‘NORTH ESK LODGE,
‘MUSSELBURGH, October 2, 1887.

‘MY DEAR DANDER,—I dare say I am not altogether correctly informed about a case which occurred last year, but as it seems to me to involve an important matter of principle, I write to you about it, premising that it is very likely that something which I do not know alters its entire complexion, as I at present understand it.

‘Some one had spoken like a cad about ——’s sister. The three leading *Nippers*, instead of kicking or pommeling the boy (as would have been done at some schools), held a sort of court on him, and caned him. You heard of it, and licked the three *Nippers*.

‘Now, it seems to me the case hangs on this. If the boy was caned by force, and got no chance of appealing, it was utterly wrong, and you were right. But if he took

it, I cannot well imagine a better way of putting down caddish things, and I would praise the boys highly. It seems to me to be rather a defect in our whole system that boys do not put down things enough themselves, but have always to come and report them. So long as appeal is always left open, and no one is ever touched against his consent, it seems to me no injustice can possibly be done. The cane is better than the hand or foot. Generally, at most schools, the hand or foot are used, sometimes righteously, and sometimes unrighteously, but with no appeal. And I would even rather an injustice was done now and then than that evil should escape with impunity. The first offender ought always to have to run a risk of getting a little more than he deserved. I have always held that if a thing is wrong, the person who puts it down or avenges it is a matter of small consequence. Might makes right in such a case, especially when there is no danger of substantial wrong, owing to the sanctity of appeal before the cane is used.

‘I was once asked whether a boy had a right to put down something. I said it depended on two things : first, if the thing was wrong, second, if he succeeded. I may add a third thing, if he gave a chance to the offender to appeal to a lawful power.

‘I am afraid that there is a jealousy of putting evil down through the whole of society. The avenger of evil, and not the doer of it, is put on his defence.

‘However, you see my chief point, that there is no risk in a school with right of appeal observed, and that deliberate cane is better than sudden foot, and that public opinion among boys is in a healthy state, if it avenges caddish things, and ought to be encouraged. . . .

The Head was particularly successful in convincing parents of the benefit their sons obtained by serving as school officers. In Scotland, where schools are so seldom regarded as nurseries of character, this was a task requiring great powers of persuasion. I append a letter to a parent on this subject, and one to a boy.

TO A PARENT.

' NORTH ESK LODGE,

' MUSSELBURGH, *October 12, 1901.*

' . . . When we arranged the Forms we made I—— head of the Middle, and I do not know at present whom we should appoint if he left it. I consulted him on the subject this morning. There are one or two boys in it who need a good deal of looking after, and there is an unusual absence of boys in it who have both the strength of character and physique, and also the entire reliability to dominate the Form. Of course you might say that the interests of your son must not be postponed to the interests of the School; to which I would reply, first, that it is looking after the tone of the School in this way that makes it a place worth sending boys to; and, secondly, that it is the best part of a boy's whole education, and worth all the knowledge that he gets at School, when he can be placed in any position of trust, and has to look after other people in an unselfish way. Of course he is not yet old enough to be in office, but within his own Form he has very much the same power and responsibility as if he was in office. He is probably not very far off office. He is one of the boys who, I always hoped, would help to keep the School straight when his time came. . . .

' People outside a School like this have no conception how much depends on having good governing boys. What boys learn is of great importance, but their characters are of infinitely greater.

TO RICHARD BELL-IRVING (then a boy at Newfield,
the Loretto Preparatory House).

' NORTH ESK LODGE,

' MUSSELBURGH, *January 2, 1902.*

' DEAR DICKIE,—. . . As to Newfield, has it ever occurred to you who is to be head if you go up? You know quite well that —— won't do. He is not a bad chap at all, and will be first rate at footer, but he would put fellows' backs up with his side, and whom could I send down from the big school?

‘You were a lucky dog ; you were a long time at home—and it’s not asking you too much to stay on a bit at Newfield. . . . You boys are apt just to look at things so far as regards yourselves, and must learn to think for others, and put yourselves in their place. Very likely you may not have the chance of being of as much use in the world for very many years as at Newfield, and you may be thankful that you have this opportunity of being useful, which is what we are all sent into the world to be.

‘Stamp on any dirty talk, or indecency of any kind. It’s the worst devil for a school, and it has once or twice shown its nasty horns in Newfield. And don’t let any boy be bullied or made a butt of. If a boy is a bit odd, it’s a cruel thing and a cowardly for a lot to set on him, as hens do on a sickly fowl—the brutes!

‘I was awfully sorry I couldn’t get to know you a bit better last term. But my windpipe went wrong, though not badly, and talking much was bad for it. I ain’t quite well yet, and may have to stay here a good deal, like a spider in the middle of his web.

‘Now if you were well educated, you ought to be able to read and understand the thing I send you. At your age I read all the debates in Parliament, but that was because I began Latin at six, and had been drilled in Cicero’s speeches at thirteen. Now there’s an awful long jaw for you. I just hope you can read it, and won’t get waxy with me.

‘Thanks for your singing.—Your affectionate HEAD.

‘P.S.—It will save me a letter if you send this to your dad. I’ve just an awful lot of writing every day.’

*A letter giving his estimate of the value of various games
as teaching public spirit.*

TO GARDEN G. SMITH, Editor of the *Tatler*.

‘NORTH ESK LODGE.

‘MUSSELBURGH, October 4, 1902.

‘I think you have somewhat misapprehended my position about golf. I was an enthusiastic golfer for fifteen years.

What made me give it up was that, with the more and more crowded condition of Musselburgh Links and the slow pace and frequent halts of the game, I could not get enough exercise out of it in the two or three hours I could give to that purpose. During my earlier years here in the "sixties" there were too few boys at Loretto to play proper football, and consequently golf was the great winter game. Its being so had certainly not a good effect on the boys' tone or character. It cultivated no school feeling, no high spirits, no courage, and no endurance. There was more personal rivalry among them then than there has been since. To say that golf is a selfish game from this point of view is to me a truism.

'We soon began to pay great attention to athletics proper, running, jumping, etc. There, of course, the danger of selfishness comes in very strongly. Consequently I have never allowed any competition for prizes among my boys. But for some years we had interscholastic athletics between several schools. The effect produced, from the unselfish point of view, was excellent. I do not think I ever heard a boy's name shouted at these games, it was always the name of the School. But when these games fell through from various causes we practically dropped athletics, though I still give prizes for the attainment of certain standards.

'I hope you now see what I mean by selfish. Cricket is not a selfish game, so long as averages are kept in the background, and a boy cares more for his school winning than for his own personal success. But I am afraid that modern cricket, with its constantly drawn games, is becoming among men, generally, as selfish a game as golf.

'Football is much less selfish. Yet even here I always discourage laying any stress upon who scores a point. Yet there is such a thing as a selfish player at football, namely, a player who will not pass to a man who has a better chance of scoring than himself. Such a player gets turned out of our team.

'Eight-oar rowing is the least selfish of all the great sports, because the whole eight share equally in a victory or defeat.

'My own favourite sport is fishing. But if we had

abundant good fishing near the School it would cultivate selfishness among the boys in exactly the same way as golf does, and school patriotism would be difficult of attainment. Yet both fishing and golf are admirable pursuits for holidays, when a boy is no longer a member of a body whose interest ought to be his first concern.

‘I shall be obliged to you, and I think it will only be fair to me, if you can put this expression of my views into the *Tailer* in any form you please.’

Letters showing the way in which he used games for the inculcation of moral and intellectual virtues.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Field*.

‘LORETTO, July 18, 1888.

‘While there has clearly been no sharp practice in the recent case, Mr. Mitchell’s letter seems to me to raise an issue of general interest and far-reaching importance.

‘He admits that the Eton eleven went in too slowly to the wickets, but defends them on the score that they were no worse than other people. For myself, I should have thought that Eton would take a pride in being better than other people, and setting an example of sportsmanlike conduct. And surely, as a general principle, the most important of all lessons which can be taught to boys is not to follow convention in games more than in other matters, but, whatever else the whole world may do, to play them according to the rules and in the spirit of chivalry. As a matter of fact, I can testify that there is no difficulty in getting a school Eleven to observe the golden rule of crossing each other when a man is out.

‘Our own Eleven, so far as minutes went, could probably have saved their chief school match of the year by dawdling when they were getting badly beaten, though I doubt whether, even as a matter of policy, dawdling is wise, as it takes off the eye of the man already at the wicket, and makes his nerve worse. But even if dawdling could save a match, I had rather see any team with which I am con-

nected lose three matches by going in quickly and bravely than save one match by dawdling.

‘And the first captain who puts the law in force, and claims a match because the other side exceed ten minutes between innings, or two minutes between wickets when trying to save a match by time, be it “but in the estimation of a hair,” will be a benefactor to the game of cricket and to the character of cricketers.

To NORMAN M‘LACHLAN (O.L.), Vicegerent of Loretto.

‘ATHOLE ARMS HOTEL,

‘DUNKELD, May 1886.

‘Well done, E——! It’s the first year we haven’t suffered by not finding out a man soon enough. Last year R—— played on 3rd side! No one came to authorities and said that they had the best bowler in the School on the 3rd side. Year before, W—— and S—— were a Saturday in 3rd and another in 2nd Eleven! I think perhaps a word from yourself to School would be good for all heads of sides to look out for, and report all unthought of people.

‘There is a terrible want of looking out for unrecognised merit all through life. If an unknown preacher were to preach Liddon’s sermon on the Spirit, how many of his hearers would say, either “That is a borrowed sermon,” or “This is one of the greatest of all pulpit orators.” Same way with painters, is it not?

‘I think it is most important for boys to learn young to have their eyes open for unsuspected merit. And nothing improves cricket more than trying unsuspected people: it keeps every one on the look-out.’

Letters dealing with questions of school morals.

To W. J. CHRYSTAL (O.L.).

‘NORTH ESK LODGE,

‘MUSSELBURGH, September 25, 1899.

‘. . . The gist of the matter is this: it is impossible to prevent the entrance of evil into a school, now of one kind,

and now of another. The difference between a good school and a bad one is this: that in the bad one it grows unchecked and affects the whole society more or less, in the good one it does not go very far before it is jumped upon. Just the same thing is true of bullying, smoking, or grubbing behind backs, etc.'

TO NORMAN M'LACHLAN (O.L.), Vicegerent of Loretto.

'STRATHAN, LOCH INVER.

' . . . I was most anxious for A—— to get no hint before he left. What I least like is the idea that any boy living among our boys could think that such talk could make him anything but wished away. I am glad there has been one case, *pour encourager les autres*.

'As to showing disapprobation, boys are neither worse nor better than most men. . . . Society would be a very unpleasant place, if people showed all the disapprobation they felt, and a worse one than it is, if well-disposed people didn't do everything in their power to clip the wings and break the force of the bad ones. Evil don't observe "laws of war" in dealing with good, and I have no hesitation in saying that I think good is usually far too squeamish about its weapons and tactics.

'Still B—— and C—— were superior friends of A——, and should have let him know their minds.

'Oh, A—— ain't an Atheist. I respect an honest unbeliever like D——, but for the scoffer I have no quarter. It is an offence for which youth is the reverse of an exculpation. For an unbeliever among unbelievers it is, of course, no sin, but in a boy—ugh!

TO MRS. REDPATH, Montreal, Canada.

'NORTH ESK LODGE,
'MUSSELBURGH, April 26, 1900.

' . . . Now that we are only half Scotch and half English and Colonial, I really do not think that much can be said

against our speech in the way of accent. I am much more anxious about keeping out foul or coarse language. I have great comfort in knowing that it is a tradition among our prefects to be strong about this. Once when I happened to hear that a boy was not clean-tongued, I wrote to him about it in the holidays. He wrote back to me in a very humble spirit, but said he was sorry I had heard of that licking he had had from the prefects. I had never heard of it; but I found they had given him a very sound caning. No school can keep out bad language altogether. Quite young boys hear it from fathers and mothers. But at Newfield, besides the prefects, I always specially pick a boy from the big school to be head of the large dormitory, as to whom I know that I can rely upon him; and I always write to this boy on appointment, telling him that far his most important duty is to keep up a high standard of purity, and to stamp out all really bad or low talk.

‘Some schools are very bad. From one of the big schools we have had two or three boys. They tell me that nothing struck them so much on coming here as the absence of foul talk, which was the usual thing there. . . . So far for speech. It was probably this you meant. I had rather a boy was clean-tongued with the worst Glasgow accent than that he talked like a prince and was not clean-tongued.’

TO FRANK ADAMS (then a Master at Loretto).

‘LORETTO.

‘. . . Sacked a fellow the other day—drunkenness—exposed at once by all who knew of it—quite solitary. . . . Had advised his removal before. Bother the fellow! He was such a fool. Poor wretch! I fear he has no moral sense.

‘Some day somebody will find out some operation which, performed on the brain (under chloroform), will make us all into saints or W. G. Graces or Tennysons, just as we prefer, or as the eternal chain of causes has conditioned what we call our consciousness to feel that it (what it calls) prefers.’

TO MRS. DAWSON, Ghyll Royd, Ilkley.

‘THE BIRNAM HOTEL,
‘BIRNAM, May 13, 1899.

‘. . . If a boy lies, or stéals, or acts viciously, I don’t get genuinely angry. I ’m very sorry then, for I know in these cases that the Devil has to run away when he is tackled, and one can be good-humoured with a flying and outwitted enemy. But when he has a show of brilliancy, or grace, when men speak kindly of him, and say “Well, you know, there ’s no great harm,” etc., etc. ; and when I know there is, if not ruin and rottenness, at least poverty of soul and death to the nobler qualities underlying all the fair show—it is then I “lose my hair,” because the brute (the Devil I mean) is not fighting fair.

‘Well, racing-gambling is one phase of this, as “have a drink” is another. . . .’

TO A PARENT.

‘. . . Perhaps it is partly my age, but I can remember many cases in which I have not hurt boys, when it was my duty and for their interest that I should hurt them. I have a great belief that the best chance for a boy being cured of evil propensities of this kind is his suffering for them. I remember one case when, for once, I really flogged a boy well for stealing and forgery. He rushed at me immediately afterwards: “Oh, Head, will you ever forgive me?” I believe that boy was cured. But talk, however strong and good, and tears, however genuine, usually leave little or no trace behind. I am glad you agree with me, and it gives me hope for the boy. I believe I shall like him from what I hear. Of course I shall tell him I know all about him. And then, I believe in never bringing up the thing again, unless something fresh occurs, but in treating him as cheerily and trustfully as I do the rest of them.’

The Head had a strong belief in the value of writing rather than speaking to boys who were in danger of falling into

bad ways. 'Litera scripta manet,' he remarks. 'Jaw a boy and he forgets.' The following letters give specimens of his manner in such communications.

TO A BOY.

‘NORTH ESK LODGE, MUSSELBURGH.

‘I was sorry to see in Mr. ——’s Report that your conduct is not altogether satisfactory. I am sorry to say that he is not the only person in whom you don’t inspire confidence. I know no particulars against you. But when a boy gets a general character, there is usually some reason for it. Now I don’t want to find out anything, except you choose to tell me yourself. What I care about is the future. For if you are going in any way wrong, either loose talking, or betting, or smoking, or grubbing behind back, or grumbling and croaking, just take a friendly warning and drop it. I do not suspect anything worse than the things I have mentioned. . . . You don’t give us the idea of being vicious, but you do not leave a satisfactory impression, and if there is anything wrong, just set to work and mend it. . . .’

TO A BOY.

‘Speaking out is the best way with you as with most people. You are slack—in work and in other things. It is your nature. You wouldn’t countenance anything you knew to be very wrong; but you have not a high enough standard, and you would let tone down, if not pulled up. . . .’

‘You have a great influence at Loretto; and you have many qualities which deservedly make you popular. Therefore I am the more afraid of you; for you are not altogether a good model, as you know.

‘Fellows who get to know you well don’t improve. They also get slack and casual; which, indeed, is one of the chief ways I have of knowing your character.

‘Seriously, I debated with myself whether it was not my duty to advise your going to a tutor’s this term. But I

thought that, even though you might thereby work better for Oxford, and though there was not a thing against your character, your leaving us might be misconstrued, and cast an undeserved slur on you. Now, having had my say, I will still venture to subscribe myself—Your affectionate

‘HEAD.’

A letter referring to the question of ‘a superannuation rule for headmasters.’

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Journal of Education*.

‘August 1900.

‘The advertisement for a headmaster for Merchant Taylors’ School, which lays down conditions of age in candidates which would have excluded Mr. Walker from St. Paul’s and Dr. Joseph Wood from Harrow, has brought the subject into fresh prominence. I hope, therefore, you will allow me to make a somewhat belated reply to the remarks of “Ponticulus.”

‘What I previously argued was, not that a few rare exceptions had happened to occur in the sphere of Church and politics, but that there was no such thing as any hard-and-fast line of superannuation in either of these spheres, and that I could see no reason why it should be otherwise in education. Far from those three great names I mentioned, which were all cases of deliberate selection at an advanced age for the highest offices in Church and State, being rare exceptions, it may safely be asserted that the majority of great recent administrators, in both the one and the other, have been even more efficient after the age of sixty than before it.

‘The Army is a ridiculously unfair parallel, for obvious reasons (though Lord Roberts has probably more energy and governing power than any ten young schoolmasters have between them); but if “Ponticulus” had happened to read an article of mine in the *Fortnightly* (January 1899), and sundry letters in the *Times*, he would have seen that I strongly object to the present rules about physical qualifications and about superannuation with regard to Army officers.

The case of the Civil Service may appear to present a closer parallel ; but it is one of those delusive apparent similarities which are often found in things essentially different in their nature. Whether, even in the case of the Civil Service, the gain of more easily getting rid of senile incapacity is not more than balanced by the occasional loss of the volcanic force of genius, is a point which I need not discuss here ; though I believe that, if we keep only constantly grasping at obvious advantages, and so constantly moving in the direction of a hard-and-fast uniformity, we shall leave something like a China to our descendants. But I protest against the profession of a schoolmaster being ranked as a branch of the Civil Service. Since the letter of "Ponticulus" appeared, the *Spectator* has conclusively pointed out the dangerous tendency which exists in this direction. "The closing up of a profession," it says, "may be necessary in order to secure a sufficient level of mediocrity among its members. But it is well to remember that the level gained will only be one of mediocrity. Genius will have no place in it, for genius is naturally impatient of anything that savours of trade-unionism." It also points out the sameness and want of initiative which has been the result in France—or rather, I should say, it accords with Mr. Bryce in employing this illustration.

‘But the business of the Civil Servant is mainly administrative. He has not to work at new departures from first principles—that is the business of the legislator, or of a Minister of State, who is not dwarfed and cramped by the prospect of compulsory retirement. Neither is it his function to exercise a magnetic force on the minds and characters of others.

‘The schoolmaster should rather be classed with the clergyman, the statesman, and the man of letters. His is a sacred calling, a cure of souls, as well as of intellects and bodies. He has constantly to appeal to first principles, to adapt all the details of daily life to the conclusions of science and common-sense, and in doing this he can use his school as a lever for moving society where the truth is a neglected one, and the adoption of it by an individual

would be as hard a task as brave old Jonas Hanway had to perform with his umbrella. The schoolmaster has to watch the ever-changing circumstances and requirements of the times in which he lives; to take what is good of the new, without losing hold of what is sound and permanent in the old. He has to show a firm front in resisting the whims and prejudices of ignorant and unreasonable individuals, or the still more dangerous and mischievous fashions of epidemic opinion. And he shares with the genuine man of letters the duty of not only doing the best he can for the average mind and character, but of moulding, perhaps, a very few of his pupils, so that they may become centres of light and truth and inspiration to those who in turn are to come after them.

‘The disciple will not, indeed, be as his master. He will often be far apart from him in methods and in doctrines, but he will be one with him in love of truth, in receptivity of new ideas, and in obdurate resistance to prejudice and fashion.

‘Now, why should the teacher be relentlessly cashiered when such powers and aims have matured, and are yearly bearing more fruit, any more than the statesman, the clergyman, or the man of letters? In all the four cases many men, I grant, do much worse work after sixty than before. But what I am maintaining is that the men who are in any sense epoch-making do their best work after that age, and that they are men whom any of these four professions, and the society whom they influence, can least afford to lose.

‘Arnold may be quoted against me by those who ignore Thring; but I do not perceive how any one can read Arnold’s letters and not see how this great spirit was mysteriously cut off in the early spring of his reforming work. Many have since said that they were “imitating Arnold,” when they merely stuck fast on the last step of his arrested progress. It has been said that everything was always an open question to Arnold to the end of his days.

‘He speaks in one of his letters of the vast untouched questions on the physical side of life. Can we doubt that if Arnold had lived, the gigantic abuse of scholarships, meant for the poor, but perverted into making intellectual mon-

strosities of the sons of sufficiently wealthy men, would ever have sprung up ; or that he would not have discovered the folly of choosing school officers solely by intellectual attainment ? The premature death of Arnold was as great a loss to the English nation as that of Salisbury, or Temple, or Herbert Spencer would be ; and so it would have been had Arnold died twenty years later.

‘ Nor would the fixing of a hard-and-fast age save us from inefficiency. I have known several cases of admirable young schoolmasters becoming utter fossils before forty. And if such an age as sixty were fixed, few boards of trustees would like to superannuate the greatest drone before he had attained that age.

‘ It has been said to me by a friend that liveliness is the most necessary quality of a schoolmaster ; that men lose their liveliness by sixty. Do they ? Why should they ? If a man buries himself among his books, thinks it beneath his dignity, or not worth the time, to take more exercise than a short perfunctory walk ; if he cultivates an artificial distance and solemnity with boys, whom he should treat with the geniality and playfulness of a good elder brother, he *will* lose his liveliness long before the appointed age. But if he lives the life which by precept and example he should teach his boys to live—a natural, hardy, largely open-air life ; if he imposes upon himself, and all aspirants for subordinate posts under him, the duty of taking hard daily exercise in absolutely all weathers, and observing those laws of health which should be the subjects on which his teaching should be most minute and earnest ; and if his study is rather a place of fun than of terror for his boys, I fail to see why he should lose his liveliness, any more than the statesman or the bishop does, and why those who lead a natural life should suffer for the “ physical sins ” of others.

‘ I write keenly on this subject because I trust that I shall be a founder of a School, and although I am already past the age of condemnation, I have not completed my work. But this I know, that if I do succeed in founding Loretto, one of the statutes of the School shall be that the Governing Body, which will probably consist of three to five

“old boys,” shall be bound to dismiss any headmaster whom they consider incompetent, without any reference to age; and that this shall be the only power, in matters not financial, which they shall possess over him; and that he in turn shall have the same power and duty with regard to his colleagues. And it shall, I hope, be provided in my will that if my intentions, by Royal Commission or otherwise, are ever violated in this particular, and Loretto shall be forced to fall into line with the Civil Service, it shall cease to be a School.

‘It will, indeed, be time to throw up the sponge for any pioneer school, if the spirit of trade-unionism, which already is sapping our commercial prosperity, shall, in order to place a definite time limit upon incompetence, pounce, like some cruel form of death, upon the still gathering experience, and the still increasing wisdom and enthusiasm of those exceptional men who are the very salt of the earth, and, with a cruelty greater than that of death, probably condemn them to be helpless witnesses of the wreck of their uncompleted work by some conventional successor, or compromising “Board.”’

‘And what is the man to do with the rest of his life, torn, with workhouse cruelty, from the object of his affections? For if a man does not love his school so that it is like death to part from it, he should have been something else than a schoolmaster. As I said in the letter to the *Times* out of which the present correspondence has arisen, if he is a clergyman, he may find, with sad heart, some other sphere of personal work, and, plunging into it, may wear off the bitterness of his separation. But if he be a layman, what is he to do with the rest of his life? I never cease to be thankful that I have not to ask myself that question; so that it is with no personal motive that I protest against a movement and a tendency which I believe to be both cruel to the born schoolmaster and disastrous to the highest interests of education.

‘It is remarkable that, at the very time when there is a movement to apply to education the principles on which the Civil Services are managed, there should appear the protest

against these very principles which has been so influentially signed in the July and August numbers of the *Nineteenth Century*. It is not only in the War Office that hard-and-fast rules, similar to those for which so many of our fellow-educationists are labouring, have produced their natural green fruit of red tape, or rather barbed wire fixity of tenure and tolerated incapacity, ruthless removal of exceptional men at the height of their usefulness, dislike to, and repression of individuality, and consequent discouragement of all originality of thought and action. I said "green fruit," for the ripe fruit is the mandarin and China, from which may the Lord deliver us! The soundest business heads in the country are now advocating for the Civil Service the great principles of (1) removable despots, and (2) promotion not by age, seniority, or favour, but by merit only.

"It is certain," says Mr. Henry Birchenough, "that some means will have to be found to add to the present integrity, loyalty, capacity, and devotion of the public services the stimulus to initiative, to higher responsibility, and to more active exertion, which they do not at present possess." And yet it is precisely this stimulus of which "Ponticulus" and those who side with him would deprive education, by artificial limits upon the age, responsibility, and independence of those who are entrusted with the management of our schools. Let us be removable despots, not the noun without the adjective, or the adjective without the noun, but both together.'

A letter laying down various rules for headmasters or vicegerents.

TO NORMAN M'LACHLAN (O.L.), to whom he had offered the post of Vicegerent.

‘STRATHAN,

‘LOCH INVER, *August 2, 1886.*

‘. . . To be successful, however, one or two things have to be borne in mind :

‘1. The main object in dealing with boys is to secure behind-back obedience and loyal co-operation. The surface

order, and freedom from apparent hitches, of most of the public schools is easily obtained by being peremptory and absolute, but the other is what is truly valuable.

‘2. To this end I would lay down as an almost absolute rule: never punish a boy till he has admitted he is wrong. If, *e.g.*, I had punished —, when there was bad blood between him and —, I would have left him in a permanent sense of wrong, and we would have lost the fine fellow he is now.

‘3. Never, if possible, make an edict introducing anything new, or reversing anything old, without consulting upper boys and those concerned freely, carrying them with you, if possible. I have often postponed a thing I wanted to do till I had carried the boys with me.

‘4. Let every boy feel that he can come and respectfully state his whole case about anything, without any fear whatever of giving offence.

‘5. As long as possible, suppose there is an explanation for anything that seems unaccountable in the conduct of man or boy.

‘6. When you have once said a thing, either stick to it, or revoke it; never, never let it be calmly ignored or “drop.” . . .

‘Again, I repeat it, because this is the very fundamental principle of able government, and the one which all masters, with rare exceptions, fail to understand, that the maintenance of our admittedly exceptional (if not unique) purity, honour, obedience to rules, absence of smoking and grubbing behind-back, are simply due to my keeping in touch with the boys, and never doing anything whatever by force which I can accomplish by persuasion. . . .’

Letters commending the virtue of patience in dealing with boys.

TO NORMAN M'LACHLAN (O.L.), Vicegerent of Loretto.

‘INVERAN HOTEL,
‘SUTHERLAND, April 1, 1890.

‘. . . By the way, don't think I am the least hurt by your saying I am often too lenient, etc., with big boys. I

admit it, and oftener with slack masters. It is a reaction from my old violence when I first headmastered. But bear in mind that the total result is a condition of purity and honour, in the main, which, by all accounts, is not attained elsewhere; and that there are certain principles, passed on by Q—— to X—— and Y——, and, I think, partly to yourself, which would make an admirable public school of the usual type, but revolutionise Loretto. There are one or two principles in your letters, implied and partly expressed, especially your idea of “doing something,” and of being sharp because sharpness was deserved, that I want to talk over with you, and we shall, I dare say, *ut fit*, both approach nearer intermediate ground.’

TO NORMAN M‘LACHLAN (O.L.), Vicegerent of Loretto.

‘INVERAN HOTEL,

‘SUTHERLAND, February 15, 1889.

‘. . . Lecture, etc. May I ask, do you expect to succeed the first time? I am sure from the way you write in the *Lorettonnian* that you can speak to the point; but it needs a little practice.

‘And, by the way, I do wish you and Tristram would agree to take up the preaching business. I dare say you have no time to write during term, but you might some holidays.

‘As to “ill-mannered cubs,” why, it’s their nature to, and if you turned a boy out of hall when you were quite sure the conduct was wanton and not merely that his thoughts were far away, it would do a lot of good. But I know that, whatever subject one takes, some boys will be bored. *E.g.* Carl is, by anything like history. Others take in every word of history and hate science. Others, again, like a lecture and don’t like a reading, and *vice versâ*.

‘I think you should encourage them to express their thoughts and criticisms to you privately—say, when you have them at tea. I know I have got infinite good from boys’ criticisms. I only wish I could always know all they think

about everything and everybody, myself included. I remember you did me a lot of good by telling me I repeated myself in a chapel lecture. I believe I have improved since, but at that time I had begun to believe that I might take to extemporary preaching, which I now know I am not made for, or, at least, not trained for. And let people sleep when you are preaching or lecturing, provided they don't make faces or talk in their sleep. You can't catch every one if you preached like Paul. You would have to preach like John Knox for that, and look as if you were going to turn a somersault, or say something about an "oily but misguided Hottentot." Then they wouldn't sleep. Paul didn't do that, or Eutychus wouldn't have tumbled from the gallery. . . .'

TO NORMAN M'LACHLAN (O.L.), Vicegerent of Loretto.

'INVERAN HOTEL,
'SUTHERLAND, *March 19, 1890.*

' . . . I have certainly always held as a principle that prefects were punishable, having in my eye possible cases where punishment was the only alternative to expulsion. But I have never punished. I thought I had once set — an imposition, but he tells me I wrote and withdrew it. I probably believe and act rather too much on the principle of gradually winning over a big boy to do what is right. Sometimes it fails ; yet I doubt, on the whole, whether the aggregate of good is not greater, where you win over without hurting self-respect. Jowett once set me a very small imposition at college. I felt snubbed, and have never been able to bring myself to like Jowett since, and yet I don't think I am proud. I put it to you. If I had done anything to you as a prefect, would you ever have felt quite the same to me afterwards? I doubt it. . . .

'I firmly believe that part of my power of getting boys to do what I want is owing to my known reluctance to act. I have, *e.g.*, never once imposed a penalty for any of my numerous dress rules (except possibly a sea hole);* and yet

* Run to the Sea Hole on the Links.—R. J. M.

if a big fellow kept his coat on at golf or dinner on a hot day, it would annoy me more and really be a greater breach of my ideas than his being late. Prefect lateness has gradually been dying out, and I think I see with next year's lot a chance of stamping it out. It has often been my policy to wait for a certain lot of boys before driving a particular nail in. If you do take my line about ——, I would show myself much wounded by the way he left the room. If he sees he has distressed and annoyed you, it will affect him more than any amount of displeasure, and I think you are more likely thus to get a hold of his peculiar nature. Now Y—— needed coercion. He had not much altruism in him. Let me know what you think.'

The importance of not injuring the 'amour propre' of boys.

TO A COLLEAGUE.

'NORTH ESK LODGE,
'MUSSELBURGH, Sep. 25, 1886.

' . . . Now I don't think that, except under very rare circumstances, any one should employ humour personally, when displeased. Do forgive my saying this. It is said with the best intentions.

'As to licking—boys have objected to it because they did not think they deserved it, not, so far as I know, because too big.

'It is a very hard fate, that a man whom I so long felt to be essentially in sympathy with me, far more than most people are, should be alienated and go on misconceiving me, because I tried to cure him of two faults which I believed were impairing his usefulness, viz. first, the wrong use of humour; second, the using epithets like "fool," "owl," etc. to boys—a thing which I believe should never be done without subsequent apology; and, thirdly, because, in spite of my care to avoid them, he was subject to some grievances, arising partly out of the forgetfulness of an overloaded brain, and partly out of misconceptions as unsubstantial as the idea that no notice was given of the day of meeting. Is

it too late to recover that old, pleasant, and cordial understanding which has made me many times say that of all colleagues (not old pupils) I had ever had, there was none for whom I had felt such warm regard as for yourself?'

TO THE SAME.

'NORTH ESK LODGE,
'MUSSELBURGH, September 1886.

' . . . I cannot let it remain on record that I deliberately think that big and small boys in a Form should be treated differently. I would rather lay down the principle that I would, if possible, avoid any treatment which unnecessarily injured the *amour propre* of any boy. *E.g.*, I have sometimes said to a new big boy: "If you feel that being licked would be an indignity to you, I would, in most cases, where I do not wish to inflict indignity, substitute another punishment. Otherwise, one boy gets so much pain, another pain *plus* indignity." I would apply the same principle to modes of speaking. If the use of a certain style of slanging does not insult P—— [a little boy], and is felt by M—— [a big boy] to insult him, I would certainly avoid using it to M——. But I can't say I find the difficulty a practical one myself. I would probably say to M——, if he did anything lickable, that I thought he had better make up his mind not to be insulted by what was usual in the Form. As a matter of fact, boys have not objected to being licked, nor complained of it; even though being licked at eighteen is almost exclusively Lorettonian. Where I join issue with you is in the use of sarcasm and name-calling. If I called a "Nipper" "an owl" or "a fool," except in fun, I think I would withdraw the epithet. I believe in telling all boys, big and small, that they have been idle, or ill-conducted, or slack, etc., etc., as the case may be, in as plain, strong English as they deserve; but usually, except when an exceptionally forward boy needs putting down, in a manner destitute of wit or point. The slight natural difference in the way of dealing with M—— or P—— is to me unconscious, though I

believe that it does exist to a small extent, and ought to. But it does not amount to a difference of "treatment."

The Head's own readiness to apologise prejudiced him against Masters of the infallible type. Appended is an excerpt on this subject.

TO E. P. FREDERICK (then a Master at Loretto).

'NORTH ESK LODGE,
'MUSSELBURGH, January 6, 1889.

' . . . Both instinctively and on principle I always lean to the person who is ready to admit that he has sinned. In fact, if I didn't, I don't know how I could call myself a Christian. But if one of the two parties to a quarrel goes upon the assumption that he cannot possibly have been wrong, and does not at least humbly try and find out what mistakes he has made, I perhaps too readily take the side against him. That I think has sometimes explained my attitude between master and boy (I know it did with —) —the master not asking "What have I done? What temper or want of consideration have I shown? How far have I presumed on the force at my disposal? Would this difficulty have happened, had So-and-So been in my place?" but assuming that he must have been absolutely and entirely right the whole time, which it is very rare that any one is, when heat is evolved between two people. . . .'

The following letter, written to an old boy thirty years his junior, affords an example of his own way of dealing with misunderstandings.

' . . . I know you will be sorry that influenza has left such a mark on my vocal chords that I am told not to speak or go out.

'This utterly unexpected brush with you has made my sick time very miserable. . . . You have somewhat hurt me by appearing to doubt my word. I think that my

own absence of self-recrimination in the matter ought to be weighed against a good deal of report. Few people can repeat anything really accurately, and a difference of tone or context would often put things in a totally different light. Such is the result of a very long experience of misunderstandings.

‘For the rest of my letter—I am sorry if I offended you. I merely wrote in explanation of what I said about examinations. I know I wish old boys would come oftener at other times.

‘But this whole subject had better be the subject of a talk than of letters. You say out all you think, and let me do the same, and let neither of us take any offence at the other man speaking out his mind. We have both made mistakes.

‘Now, my dear B——, you really must not allow misunderstandings of this sort to endanger a friendship which is as dear to me as you say it is to you. For misunderstanding I am convinced it is. Some carelessness, on my part, there may have been, and some insatiable love of repeating things on the part of some of the people who spoke to you, and also some overstrained sensitiveness on your part. But that you and I, at least, have never varied in our feelings towards each other, I believe, and towards you I know I have not. Now cheer my trouble, write me a pleasant letter, and say when you are coming to see me.—
Ever your most affectionate HEAD.’

Letters illustrative of the Head's relations to his Masters, the fourth of them written at a period when these relations had been strained.

TO E. P. FREDERICK (then a Candidate for a Mastership at the School).

‘STRATHAN,

‘LOCH INVER, August 23, 1882.

‘. . . I ought to mention some of the drawbacks of the School. There is no “society,” and indeed no time for it, on account of our evening work. Frankly, many men do

not like the place. The life is rather humdrum, with little variety or recreation except outdoor games, whist, and the society of colleagues; and the hours of work are suited rather to my ideas of the good of boys than the convenience of masters; and the food in hall is plainer than at most masters' tables.

'And any one who approves of any stiffness of relationship between masters and boys, of which I regard cap and gown (which we don't wear) as a symbol, should not come to us. All the same, I think I may say that our boys, if rightly and sympathetically treated, are peculiarly tractable, orderly, and obedient. I do not approve of much punishment, and object to "lines" altogether. What punishment there is is mainly the cane (with an appeal to me, if a boy wishes it), and doing over again badly done lessons.

'I can't give any pledge as to tenure. If I can find a man who will throw himself *con amore* into his work, and who will succeed in that work, and fall in with the spirit of the place, you may depend upon it that I shall be most anxious to keep him. But such men are, in my experience, rare, and men who have not succeeded with us would tell you that changes in our staff are too common. Of the two last occupants of the vacant post, however, one left because he got a better thing at Malvern, and one has just left because I declined to raise his salary as much as he wished me to do.

'May I ask you, if we come to terms, to keep this letter, and let me have it to copy after my return to Loretto?'

TO NORMAN M'LACHLAN (O.L.), Vicegerent of Loretto.

'STRATHAN,

'LOCH INVER, August 26, 1886.

'... It is very bad for a boy that he should have really no leisure. Indeed, to tell you the truth, I don't believe in the present long hours of work of the Sixth Form.

'I think your time has been unduly full. A great deal of the best work is done by meditation, and having time to let things simmer. Otherwise any one is certain both to

get into grooves, and to get into a hurried way of settling all sorts of things without digesting them. Very few matters indeed are so simple as they seem at first. What I always try with any new idea is to dwell on it till I see it in imagination in actual working.

‘I take, but in the best of spirits, a little exception to what you say about my temperament and health. My work, as you know, has been pioneer work. In one sense, I am always at it, *i.e.* I take real interest in scarcely anything else. I have always several bills, as it were, before my mental Parliament.

‘As to my irritability, the boys now experience hardly anything of it, since they ceased believing that they could, at a minute’s notice, appreciate the importance of a wheel or a screw as well as I could. And when masters (if ever) see that I have done (pray don’t accuse me of bragging, for it is in self-defence to my vicegerent) what no one else has done, and built up a public school on nothing which already they admit to have the highest notions of morality and honour of, probably, any school; and, further, that this in itself is only an incidental end, but that I am planning how to use this as a lever for helping on the next great stage in human progress, *viz.* the supremacy of reason and natural law over custom and caprice in matters of conduct and daily life (as they have already gained the upper hand in matters of opinion)—when they understand and appreciate all this, and give me the same unqualified support that the boys do, then I shall get on with them as with the boys.

‘Don’t, my dear fellow, don’t for one moment suppose that I don’t know that I am full of faults. The better work any man (save one) has ever done, the more faults he has been conscious of, and, possibly, the more mistakes he has made. . . .

‘. . . But is it in human nature for a person who has so many things on his mind as I have, never to forget? You would pity me if you sometimes heard me saying to my wife: “I’ve tried to remember everything, but some of the men are certain to have something up which I’ve forgotten. What can I do?”

‘ . . . As to our own relations—I should be able to feel to you, and you to me—“He will always do me the justice, if I do anything he doesn’t understand, of supposing that I had some reason he doesn’t know; and if he forgets anything, I know it’s not meant for a slight, but because his mind is like a full pitcher.”

‘ . . . What I do dislike is men taking up my time and thoughts with personal matters which they could manage amicably if they had more tact, and entered more into boys’ feelings. Any irritation I may show is often caused by being taken up with such matters, in which I know I will hardly ever give satisfaction to the man, because most personal differences between master and boy are caused by some deficiency or fault on his side (at least it has generally been the case, when I have been in strained relations with a boy), when I want to direct my thoughts to more important matters.

‘ Within the last year or so, besides bringing out my sermons, I have worked hard at Cotterill’s book* (with which he was in too great a hurry, but, as it was a good thing, I thought it worth while to do my best for it), I have had a considerable hand in Dr. Fletcher’s most important pamphlet, have written a large number of letters in various fruitful directions to papers and people working in my own direction, and have taken in hand what really might be an epoch-making lecture, if well done, “Health Teaching and Corresponding Practice, as it is and ought to be, in Elementary Schools.” I say seriously that if my colleagues had pulled with me without a jar last term, I would be getting on with that; and I actually postponed an interview with Charlie Cathcart, because my mind was too crammed with “serving tables.”

‘ . . . But for the glaring injustice and folly of the thing, how I would like a clean sweep of all but you and —— and ——, tell the new men together what my work and plans were, and ask them to believe in the work, and work with me.

‘ . . . There is hardly any class of men so bigoted, so like Popish priests at the time of the Reformation, as the ordinary public school and ’varsity men.

* *Suggested Reforms in Public Schools*, 1885 (Blackwood).

‘ . . . The priests of every profession hate its prophets and reformers. And yet the latter are not always wise. They make big big blunders. But the blunders should be condoned if the work is good.

‘ . . . I have tried hard to know men as I know boys. Why, I talk more and quite as freely (perhaps too freely) to A—— or B—— [masters] than to (say) L—— or M——, or N—— even [boys]. And yet L—— and M—— and N—— understand what I am working at, and sympathise more with it, and put their own “conveniences” less prominently forward than A—— or B——. Not that the men would not work harder than the boys; but it seems to me that they are touchier, and care for more paltry things, and also sympathise less with the subordination of the life, hours, etc. of the individual to that of the place than the boys do.

‘ How am I, with my engagements, health, etc., to know the men better? And in what points can I consult “conveniences” more?

‘ . . . If men would just be more high-minded, more truly ambitious, and plan, plan, plan to make the world better, would that not be the best solution? I’ve written rather at random; but wishing you, if you can, to put your finger on the sore place.

‘ . . . Lots of fishing on Shin for both you and me. Of course you are my guest all your stay at Inveran. I haven’t done much fishing here. Truth is, my mind doesn’t run on fishing. The time is short, and the work is long. Excuse my frank audacity.

‘ . . . P.S.—Fancy my delight at meeting Dean Butler, walking coatless and hatless!’

Remarks upon Thring.

TO E. P. FREDERICK, Routenburn Preparatory School.

‘ NORTH ESK LODGE,
‘ MUSSELBURGH, January 3, 1899.

‘ . . . Thring was, I suppose, a very great educator. It’s so hard to judge from description. But I can’t find out that

he put any particular hall-marks on his boys. His letters don't look like those of a man either whose heart was in boys for themselves, or who had any strong idea of making a school a lever to move opinion or practice in any direction. He was a very strong man; didn't care a rush what people said or thought; and, I would have thought, eminently lovable. Too spasmodic for my taste in his utterances.'

TO A. M. PATERSON (O.L.),
Master of the Loretto Preparatory House.

'NORTH ESK LODGE,
'MUSSELBURGH, November 1902.

'... I have been reading a lot of Thring's life and letters to-day. I look up at him as something quite out of reach for self-abnegation, fearlessness, strength of will, and consciousness of power to govern. And yet not always right or wise. It's a treat to read the way he sat upon selfish, narrow, and ignorant parents, who were, and are, at the same time, in a small minority. Let us be charitable.'

Letters dealing with Plans for founding the School.

TO C. J. G. PATERSON (O.L.), of Castle Huntly

'DRUMRUINIE LODGE,
'ULLAPOOL, July 7, 1902.

'It has for nearly forty years been my wish to found Loretto. But I have felt one difficulty with increasing force. It appears to me to be difficult to secure that the principles which I have most at heart, and to perpetuate which I would alone care to found the School, may not be interfered with by some public authority. There is certainly a tendency abroad to what Mr. Herbert Spencer calls "regulation" and "regimentation," and towards the repression of individuality of action. And if I thought Loretto was, by any agency, to be compelled to fall into line and submit to the prevailing ideas of the day, whatever these might be, I would much rather that, after my death, the land and buildings were sold to the best advantage for the benefit of my family.

I have inquired whether I can in any way so found it as to escape from this danger ; and I am told, on apparently good authority, that no such escape is possible.

‘I have no desire to perpetuate any particular curriculum or modes of teaching. Personally, I believe in Latin as the best training subject, and in Greek literature as the inspirer of the nobler intellectual qualities. But it would not distress me if I were to believe that in 1950 there would not be a word of either language taught at Loretto.

‘The principles which I do care about are those which affect life and character. It has been my aim to regulate school life and habits in every particular by what is known of physiological laws, without regard to conventional or popular ideas. It would, *e.g.*, be against these principles, if any public authority were to enforce the study of so many subjects as to necessitate longer hours of sedentary work than is consistent with a robust physical development ; if they were to encourage formal physical exercises at the expense of high-spirited games ; or if they were to ordain that all endowed schools must come under the military authorities in such matters as cadet corps uniform, or other such unwholesome or irrational habits as have been characteristic of Army management.

‘In more directly educational matters, again, there is always a tendency in public authorities to be swayed by any popular cry, and to adopt weak compromises without depth of principle.

‘My idea of a school is that it should be the harmonious embodiment of the thought of one person, who is necessarily the headmaster. He alone can see how some rule which may seem absurdly trivial to an outsider has yet indirect and unexpected bearings, affecting the deepest welfare of the community. If the school is not the property of a headmaster, he should be dismissible by trustees, or by the proprietor, who should have no other power over him. If it is his property, as in my own case, he is practically dismissible by the parents of the boys.

‘Pending the possible solution of this difficulty, as by some form of bequest which shall prevent any such interfer-

ence as I have dreaded, I have at present left my entire property to my wife, who is fully acquainted with my plans and wishes ; and I have associated with myself Mr. Tristram, who would naturally succeed me in the headmastership. . . .

‘ One thing which I would fear if the School were founded, would be that the headmaster might be forced to assimilate himself to the ordinary type, and thereby become a less efficient manager. His work, in my opinion, is to direct the educational policy of the School ; to be responsible for all appointments, from heads of departments to school officers and heads of sides and bedrooms ; to know his boys personally and informally, or, at least, all of any position and influence ; and to be cognisant of, and supreme over all their customs, institutions, and habits of life. I regard it as especially distinctive of Loretto that, while there is no school where boys have more executive authority, there is perhaps none where they are so entirely without that undefined legislative authority, with respect to habits and customs, which often constitutes an irresponsible and irrational tyranny, and not in schools only. It is the difficulty of preserving this and other distinctive features which make me so apprehensive of outside interference.

‘ Loretto claims to be a development of the public school type, and it is as such only that I care about its perpetuation.’

TO T. B. WHITSON, C.A. (O.L.).

‘ NORTH ESK LODGE,

‘ MUSSELBURGH, *February 5, 1903.*

‘ . . . It is difficult for a man to whom subtle connections have been so familiar as they are to me to put his point of view so as to be intelligible to other folk.

‘ As to the connection between roughness and purity—the chapel dress is an occasional thing, a charming contrast. But many people say of Loretto : “ What a charming place for boys to knock about in, where they cannot hurt anything ! ”

‘ Now, in a new place like ——, everything is like a shorn lawn. And that is one reason why boys love Loretto. It

is the free-and-easy abandon of the knock-about, that you won't get in new buildings. . . .

‘If you altered our rough-and-ready surroundings, I believe that the School would tumble down. It would lose its individuality. Just as Thucydides said that if any one visited Sparta, he would marvel at their villages of mud hovels being the greatest power in Greece; so the fact of Loretto’s big position * strikes the imagination because of its mean surroundings. The natural inference is: “There must be something in the genius of the place, if such a poverty-stricken hole can turn out such men.”

‘Output is everything; and add, as we are doing, a sound and original practical education for boys of and below average ability, and the School is secure. *Morals, plus physique, plus high-spiritedness, plus keen devotees of science* (a new thing since your day), and there are no fears. . . .’

* I have been recommended by a friend to omit this passage as savouring too much of vanity. But I think the reader will not misunderstand it. Men who have given their lives to the building up of institutions always see them in their potential rather than in their acknowledged importance. In the present instance, moreover, Almond was thinking of the School chiefly as a pioneer in health and rationality of life. In these respects, unless I am altogether mistaken in the argument of the two following chapters, Loretto was certainly the most important of British schools.—R. J. M.

CHAPTER XVI

HEALTH AND THE BREED OF MAN

‘REGARDED from any but a conventional point of view,’ wrote Herbert Spencer in his celebrated *Essays on Education*, ‘the fact seems strange that while the raising of first-rate bullocks is an occupation on which educated men willingly bestow much time and thought, the bringing up of fine human beings is an occupation tacitly voted unworthy of their attention. . . . Had Gulliver narrated of the Laputans that the men vied with each other in learning how best to rear the offspring of other creatures, and were careless of learning how best to rear their own offspring, he would have paralleled any of the other absurdities he ascribes to them.’ Writing to the philosopher in 1900, Almond bore testimony as follows: ‘Some twenty-five years ago I, for the first time, read your *Essays on Education*. The sentence in which you say that while so many try to rear the finest bullocks, . . . no one ever tries to rear the finest men, took hold on me as no other sentence which I have ever read has ~~done~~. My eyes were opened by it to what seemed to me a mass of prejudice and folly, on which our descendants will look back as we look on the customs of savages, and I made a solemn vow that there should be at least one exception to your well-deserved taunt.’

In spite of the unqualified strength of the admission, the debt which Almond owed to Spencer was by no means so great as is here implied. The system of physical culture in force at Loretto was, in its main features, fully developed there before Almond read the *Essays*. I have, moreover, a clear memory of his discussing them with me when he read them, and commenting upon the satisfaction it had

given him to receive such weighty and unexpected support in the cause he had so much at heart. A great thinker, in a sense, makes every subject he touches his own. But it was rather encouragement and a gain of lucidity that Almond derived from Spencer than direct suggestion.

In any case, Loretto will always remain memorable, as the scene of the most important and, so far as I know, the earliest attempt to apply scientific principles to the physical nurture of boys. As has been explained in a previous chapter, Scotland afforded an uncongenial field for such an enterprise. But the courage and unconventionality of Almond's temper rendered him little amenable to opinions which he deemed unreasonable. The scientific experiment in which he was engaged was perhaps all the more thoroughly applied that it was vigorously opposed. By the year 1870, as has just been stated, all its essential features were in full working, and if, even at the present date, they embody a standard which few schools have attempted to attain, it can be imagined how far in advance of the common practice they were at the time of their introduction.

The points of chief importance in Almond's system were the following : fresh air, personal cleanliness, diet, hours of sleep and study, physical exercise, and dress.

Of the two principal conditions of physical well-being, environment and habit, Almond attached much the greater importance to the latter. Thus he introduced the practice, an unheard-of innovation in Scotland in the 'sixties,' of sleeping with open windows, and, at a time when 'stuffiness' was regarded as a safeguard of health, insisted upon ventilation everywhere. Yet he did not neglect material considerations. As new schoolrooms and dormitories came to be built, they were constructed upon an adequate, or even ample scale. The provision of cubic space in the older bedrooms, although not in all cases as great as the most modern requirements would impose, more than satisfied the ordinary standard of the day.

In connection with Almond's ideas as to the importance of fresh air may be mentioned the fact that he anticipated by twenty years or more the conclusions of medical science

with regard to the origin and treatment of consumption. In a letter written to the *Scotsman* in 1880* he refers to the malady as 'probably one of the most preventible of diseases,' and calls attention to 'the evidence pointing to the conclusion that it is a disease of the blood mainly caused by breathing a vitiated atmosphere.' 'His ideas on this subject,' says Dr. Andrew Thomson, the physician to Loretto School, 'were fully formed in the early "seventies,"' and the letter to Dr. Philip, printed on p. 239, and referring to an incident of 1886, affords an interesting specimen of the confidence with which he could urge them in special cases.

The subject of personal cleanliness has been referred to in a previous chapter, and need not long detain us here, but in this matter perhaps even more than in his ideas about fresh air Almond was in advance of the practice of his time. Hot water was supplied in the bedrooms two nights a week, but from about the year 1864 each boy was provided with his own separate tub. Almond was a champion of the matutinal cold bath, which, except in cases specially exempted, was enforced by the rules of the School.

In the important question of diet, he from the first grasped the principle, so strongly maintained by Herbert Spencer, that high feeding is necessary to the rearing of fine boys. Loretto rations have already been described, but special reference should be made to the plentiful supplies of milk and butter which he lavished upon us in his 'enthusiasm for making delicate boys strong.' Many a feeble boy owed a notable gain of health to this generous provision.

But it was not only in what the boys ate but in what they did not eat that the system of feeding at Loretto was, and still is, superior to that of the vast majority of public schools. 'I'll tell you (cool of me) what I think the great defect of Eton,' wrote Almond in 1874 to Mr. Rouse, then a master at the College, 'you allow any amount of hurtful self-indulgence.' 'Isn't it worthy of one of Dante's Circles,' he writes twenty-eight years later to another correspondent,

* See p. 300.

‘that they actually boast of buying a cricket-field out of the profits of the grub-shop at some schools?’ In an article upon ‘The Public School Product,’ printed in the *New Review* for January 1897, the following passage occurs:—

‘I cannot, before concluding, refrain from saying a few words on what I consider to be the greatest blot on our public schools. . . . I mean what I will briefly call the “grubbing” system. It was once necessary for boys to supplement the poor and scanty food supplied at schools. It is seldom necessary now. But the supplementing lasts, and is unfortunately sanctioned by powerful tradition. I refuse to call that headmaster strong who does not do something to knock it out. I am not denying that there is a legitimate element in it. Some things are not supposed to be supplied by a school, and their arrival tends to keep up the sentiment of home, and is a fair outlet for pocket-money. But all such things should be consumed at meals, or, in the case of fruit, directly after them. Between meals there should be no eating whatever. The stomach needs a rest. And not only do I believe that an enormous amount of dyspepsia in men is due to the neglect of this rule in boyhood, but that “grubbing” in boys is very apt to pass into tipping in men. A stomach accustomed to excitement craves for it—and gets it. In fact, all physiological considerations combine to prove my point. “Grubbing” is as bad for boys as smoking is; and yet a large number of schoolmasters seem to regard the former as no evil at all, and yet take up an absurdly overstrained attitude about the latter. The tuck-shop, is, I believe, a most objectionable institution. Putting health aside—and I think I can tell the extent to which “grubbing” flourishes at a school by the complexion of the boys—this licensed spending of money on unnecessary eating is debasing both to intellect and to character. High thinking is quite consistent with the athletic spirit, but not with that of luxury and self-indulgence.’ The longer Almond lived the more importance he came to attach to food and wholesome habits in regard to it, as factors of a vigorous physique. ‘I used to think exercise was the most important

of all school questions,' he writes to a brother headmaster in 1898, 'but I think now it is second to food.'

The question of hours of sleep for boys was one upon which he never reached a certain conclusion. 'What hours of sleep,' he writes in a letter of 1902, 'ought a boy to have in summer and in winter? At various ages? At most public schools this is a matter of rule of thumb. I do not know the truth yet, but I am sure, first, that a boy under thirteen should have ten hours in bed in winter, and about nine in summer, and no growing boy less than nine in winter, and perhaps eight in summer.' Hours of sleep, therefore, varied, according to the age and condition of boys, between the limits of eight and ten hours.

Before proceeding to the consideration of the questions of hours of work and exercise it may be convenient to quote from the *Lorettonian* of January 24th and February 7th, 1885, a general statement of the time-table of the School.

'Outsiders who deign to be aware of the existence of Loretto often show themselves so egregiously mistaken about our institution, and, in particular, about the amount of time devoted to football and athletics generally, that a plain statement as to the arrangement of our life here may not be out of place. Call is at 7.15 A.M.; Roll-call 7.45; a "Links," *i.e.* a walk or run of about half a mile, is then immediately succeeded by breakfast; School, from 8.30 to 9.25; then prayers, after which arrangements for the day are made and announced. Between breakfast and dinner, at 1 P.M., every Upper, Middle, and Modern boy has three hours' school (or preparation), and half-an-hour's gymnastics, etc. He is further required by the rules to be at least another half-hour taking exercise out of doors. A junior boy has rather more school in the morning, and less in the evening. The intervals in the morning are different for every Form, so that the gymnasium, fives court, pianos, etc., can be utilised in turn. Shortly after dinner there is a "double," at which occupations for non-football players are arranged, and runs announced if it is wet. There is then an hour's drawing, singing, or "non-drawing," three days weekly; on the other three days an hour's lecture if very wet, but usually no work. Every one must be out of doors at least from 3 P.M. to 4.20 P.M. unless kept in by doctor's orders. There are usually big sides two or three days weekly lasting forty or fifty minutes, and small sides three or four days. On the

other days, and during frost (when not hard enough for skating), there is Association football or shinty. The School is divided into three or four sets for football and shinty, according to circumstances, a list being kept by the captain of each set. Boys not able to play football, play fives, or take walks or runs, and sometimes play golf, if fit for nothing more vigorous. But golf is allowed during any play-hour before football time. On Fridays the three Fifteens practise dropping, dribbling, and chucking, at the field; and on wet days there is either "a Wallyford" run ($3\frac{1}{2}$ miles), or "a long Wallyford" or "a Falside" (from $4\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 miles), and occasionally a "Three Trees and Falside" (about 7 miles). On Saturdays those not in the teams have a longer "grind," except when school matches are played here, when they are let off with "a Falside" (run) after seeing the match. Tea is at 4.35 P.M. Between 5.15 P.M. and 8.30 P.M. every boy has school (or preparation) enough to make his total school time, not reckoning the afternoon, up to six hours daily, except on Saturdays, when there is only an hour's singing or "non-singing." Prayers at 8.30, then supper. There is a bell at 9.15, after which no noise is allowed. Gas out at various times, chiefly according to age, from 9.45 to 11.30 P.M. After prayers there is usually a good deal of voluntary [physical] work in the gymnasium, but a good deal of extra [intellectual] work is done in the upper School between prayers and bed-time.

'On Sunday, breakfast is at 8.45; prayers and a short Scripture lesson at 9.45; morning chapel at 11; afternoon "double" at 2. After this every one is expected to take a walk of about six miles. School is shortly after 4, and tea about 5. At 6.15 there is singing (or "non-singing") for an hour, and at 8.20 evening chapel. In summer the arrangements are slightly different, evening chapel being an hour earlier, so that a walk is taken in the evening after chapel, instead of in the afternoon.'

It will be observed that the lesson hours in the above statement, which I have quoted at length for the information of schoolmasters, are considerably shorter than at most schools. Almond held that if due regard were paid to the claims of individual character, on the one hand, and of bodily vigour, on the other, these hours were long enough. It may be added that he believed them also to be long enough for the attainment of the best results of study.

Almond's opinions with regard to the intellectual side of school education will be fully discussed in a later chapter. It is sufficient here to record his attitude with reference to

that intellectual overwork of boys which is becoming a more and more marked feature of our time. Of the whole vast system of baby scholarships with their bribes to precocity, of competitive examinations ever increasing in exaction, of tyrannous cramming reckless of physical injury inflicted, he was the determined foe. Regarding the training of the young with the eye of a man of science he could not but be at enmity with arrangements which, moving now rapidly to their final development, are, to parody a well-known phrase, 'the negation of science erected into a system.' A few quotations will suffice to show the energy of hatred with which he regarded them.

'A father of a growing boy,' he writes in 1881, 'when expressing his desire that his son should not be overworked, said to me: "I have a house in my vinery in which I force young grapes; when the grapes are gathered, I pull up the plants—they are no more good."' The following is taken from a letter to Sir Henry Craik: 'If I had spent the same sum in open scholarships which I have spent on giving free education to boys who needed it, we would have bribed material which would have given us as great a reputation in the scholarship race as we have in the football field. But there is a Day of Judgment, and to bribe little boys to overtax their vital energies in order to get money would render me, or any one with my physiological knowledge, liable to be called then to a very serious account.' 'Now there is a feasible programme,' he writes to a colleague, after giving a sketch of an ideal curriculum, 'not overloaded, and not requiring more than six or seven hours at books per diem. And then those accursed examinations come in and say: 'No! Thou shalt cram. Thou shalt confine. Thou shalt rob of oxygen, and high spirits, and firm, healthy tissues. And such are the leaders of British regiments, and the governors of millions of Asiatics, who respect only men of nerve.' But I have reserved to the last the strongest passage, a passage in which the swearing is prophetic, not profane: 'Oh those damnable examinations! I believe I'd die willingly, if, like Samson, I could pull down that accursed building on the top of me.'

With regard to physical exercise, the general opinion is that public schools pay more than sufficient attention to it. In a sense this is the case, but those who are familiar with the actual working of the physical system of most of these schools are well aware that while many of the most vigorous boys get even too much exercise, as many of the lazy and timid ones get too little. If the nominal programme were adhered to, all would be well. But this programme is often interrupted by various causes, of which the more important are shirking, 'looking on,' detention, and bad weather.

At Loretto the public opinion of the boys and the general efficiency of the arrangements practically eliminated shirking. The practice of 'looking on,' as we have seen in the timetable above quoted, was kept within strict limits, nor was it ever permitted to interfere with the sufficient daily exercise of each boy. Those who had been looking on were obliged to take a run, or play a game after the match was over. Of the custom so common at most schools of depriving boys of exercise by means of the punishments of detention or 'lines' Almond entertained strong opinions. 'Personally I would as soon bleed them,' he remarks in an article on the Public School Product. And again in a letter to a public school master: 'I would consider the Chinese punishment of depriving of sleep as less dangerous than the depriving of exercise. It would be much better to put a boy on bread and water than to do that.' As for bad weather, so common in our stormy island, Loretto boys were trained to defy it. The following exercise-table of ten bad days in December 1882, reprinted from the *Lorettonian* of the 6th of that month, shows us the system at work in an extreme instance.

'Monday, Dec. 4. Pouring rain—Wallyford run.

Tuesday, Dec. 5. Snow—Falside run.

Wednesday, Dec. 6. Snowballing sides in Park and Orchard.

Thursday, Dec. 7. Snowballing sides on Field and Linkfield.

Friday, Dec. 8. Partial thaw—long walks.

Saturday, Dec. 9. Heavy showers of snow, then rapid thaw.

About thirty fellows did "Three Trees" and Falside run (snow often knee-deep); about as many went by train to

Longniddry and waded home; while the small boys went by train to Prestonpans, and walked home by Tranent.

Sunday, Dec. 10. Fine and frosty in afternoon. Every one got about four miles' walking.

Monday, Dec. 11. Snow in field hard enough for dribbling side for light fellows. Several sleighs were set a-going down the hill near the Esk. The rest having to put up with walks—at least five miles being expected.

Tuesday, Dec. 12. Seventeen degrees of frost at 10 A.M. Slides, spoiled by slush, were put in order late last night and this morning. Skating for twenty Upper boys at small pond near Levenhall. Several sleighing and making sleighs. Large dribbling side of smaller boys at field.'

The care and sympathetic working of the arrangements with regard to exercise, again, did much to obviate the common objection to all unusual efficiency of school organisation that it curtails too much the liberty of boys, and does not make sufficient allowance for individual tastes. 'Leisure has almost disappeared from school,' wrote a critic of the public schools in the *Review of Reviews* for May 1897. 'Boys are driven to the mill and forced to play games or look on at them, whether they like it or not.' The reply of the editor of the *Lorettonian* gives an interesting picture of the variety of pursuits at Loretto on a chance Saturday in May.

'24 were playing matches or scoring, 42 were "watching" (the conditions of "watching" being about two and a half miles' exercise in the afternoon, and some game, such as "dex," in the evening), 38 were free from about noon to 7.30 P.M., of whom 15 were nest-ing, 2 golfing, 13 bicycling, 5 photographing, 2 taking a long walk. Of those who were at dinner, 4 afterwards played lawn-tennis, and 7 bicycled.'

The subject of outdoor sports and pastimes at Loretto has been already sufficiently handled elsewhere, but a word should be said of the careful system of bodily measurements which Almond instituted at Loretto in the later 'sixties.' From the collection of statistics thus made he was able to show the great advantage at every age, particularly in the matter of chest measurement, possessed by boys reared at Loretto as compared with new boys, and, writing in 1900, to

prove that the new boys coming to Loretto during the last years of the century, and therefore probably new boys of the public school class throughout the country, had a distinctly better physique than their predecessors of the 'seventies.' But the use he made from an early period of the records of chest measurement is so characteristic as to merit special notice. The following letter, already referred to in connection with Almond's opinion with regard to consumption, shows the scientific trainer of the young human animal detecting the approach of disease.

TO R. W. PHILIP, Esq., M.D., 45 Charlotte Square,
Edinburgh.

'NORTH ESK, LODGE,
'MUSSELBURGH, *December 17, 1898.*

' . . . A narrow-chested, poorly-nourished boy came here in 1884. He improved greatly in the next two years, chest from 29½ inches to 35, weight from 6 st. 11 to 8 st. 4, and I was quite happy about him. He was also tall of his age, growing from 5 ft. 1½ to 5 ft. 7 in the time. He never appeared in our medical books except for a weak knee till November 3rd, 1887, and there was no other ostensible cause for his doing so then, except what I am about to tell you. On looking at the October measurements as soon as I had time after we met, I found that while he had increased in height nearly three inches in the year, and also strange to say in weight, his chest girth was stationary, and had in fact gone back since the preceding April. On which, of course, I had him examined by Dr. Thomson. His report in our doctor's book was as follows: "Respiration imperfect on left side, lung not expanding as well as on right, vocal resonance increased on same side, percussion note flat also, arterial pulsation much increased in vessels of neck, general appearance tends to the fear of tubercle, will require great care with absolute rest." The boy, who fortunately had a strong will, accordingly went home to —shire. I saw him before he left and said: "Can you manage your mother?" and he said he thought he could. "Well then," I said, "don't let them kill you at Torquay or Bournemouth,

but stay at home. You have plenty of shooting. Be out all day, never drive, but always come in in a sweat from exercise, change every stitch at once, wear nothing but flannel, sleep with your window open, and stick to these directions in all weathers, taking, of course, plenty of cod-liver oil, milk, etc.” Three years afterwards I was on our cricket-field, and a big fellow looked down on me. I said, “What, is this ——?” and he said, “It is just me, and I have done what you told me, and I am thirteen stone, and quite strong.”

Mention has already been made of the introduction at Loretto about the year 1873 of boots made in the shape of the human foot.* The physical advantages of this innovation are too numerous to be here recorded. With regard to clothing generally, Almond attached as high a value to the loose tweed and flannel dressing which, except in chapel and on state occasions, was habitual at Loretto. The comfort and convenience of such garments, and their effect in conducing to the avoidance of chills, is recognised by all sportsmen. Even more important, however, in Almond’s view, than the adoption of such a dress was the practice of changing immediately if wet, or after violent exercise. There was no maxim of health more engrained in Loretto boys than this. Another of his golden rules for the avoidance of chills in this climate may be quoted in this connection: ‘When cold get warm by exercise. Never go near a fire until you are already warm.’

To the absence of linen shirts and collars, particularly of high collars, he attributed another benefit of a less obvious kind. ‘I think that what conduces to vigour with us,’ he writes, ‘is that every one wears a flannel shirt open at neck, and no starch. High-collared boys would naturally want to lounge about and gossip at intervals. Our boys, even up to nineteen, are always doing something with a ball at such times.’

Similar to his disapproval of starched collars was his objection to waistcoats for boys. He considered that, in

* Almond’s attention was directed to the advantage of ‘anatomical’ boots by the late Rev. Charles Darnell, Headmaster of Cargilfield Preparatory School, which was then situated in Trinity, Edinburgh.

the case of growing youths, they interfered with the development of the lungs. 'Our chest girths jumped up at once,' he writes, 'when we practically abolished waistcoats. Especially in the growing human animal, the chest should meet with no resistance in its expansion, and waistcoats are apt to be tight with growing boys.' But with coats, also, so soon as the temperature rose above 60° or so, Almond had a standing quarrel. He attached high importance, and that not on merely physical grounds, to free transpiration. 'Why, oh why,' he was always asking, 'should people be obliged to wear unnecessary garments? Why should we increase already enervating heat?' Loretto boys thus lived in shirt and knickerbockers in warm weather, and also, it must be admitted, in much weather that might seem anything but warm to older persons living a less simple and hardy life. In really cold weather, however, 'sweaters' and even 'ulsters' were carefully enjoined.

As has been mentioned already, it was only in chapel and on other full-dress occasions that the strict application of scientific principle to questions of dress was suspended. Yet even with these sole surviving concessions to usage we find evidence of discontent. The following echo of a hot Commemoration Day is taken from the *Lorettonian* of June 8, 1895:—

'There is no doubt that our singing on the Anniversary Day was not nearly so good as it is at practice. Why is this? Simply because at practice in warm weather we dress in accordance with common-sense, *i.e.* in shirts and trousers only, whereas, on occasions like the Anniversary, and, we regret to say, the public worship of God in general, we are still practically obliged also to worship in the House of Rimmon, by wearing an absurd weight of garments. Let all Lorettonians do all they can, with prudence, to bring about the reign of common-sense in such matters. How thankful every one will be when it comes! But *festina lente*.'

Meanwhile, every Loretto boy is to some extent a 'quick-change artist.' As soon as the special function—Sunday chapel, Anniversary, or Sunday walk—is over, he resumes his 'whites.'

As the reader has already been informed, the physical

system at Loretto was not the result of rules introduced by fiat and enforced by penalty. Petty breaches of health regulations were, indeed, checked by the cane, but the force at the back of the system was not compulsion but persuasion. In the matter of persuasion with regard to health Almond was a mere Paul, 'instant in season, out of season.' Not even his colleagues were exempt from his friendly insinuations. 'P., B., and I,' writes Mr. Marzials, 'had gone up to a dance in Edinburgh, and did not get back to Musselburgh till about 5 A.M. The next morning the Head packed off B. to bed (B. being an older man was not as fresh as P. and myself), and then, taking both of us by the arm, he walked us up and down outside No. 3, saying: "Whatever you do, preserve your nervous force, and don't play tricks with it!" We felt more like naughty boys than grown men.'

Such in its main outlines, then, was the system of physical nurture introduced at Loretto in 1870 and earlier years, and such the method of its maintenance. And if readers who have been acquainted with the physical system at present in vogue at other Scottish public and preparatory schools should consider that it presents no very marked superiorities to the methods and habits to which they were themselves accustomed, they should remember, in the first place, that, in the matter of physical education, the Scottish public schools are, for the most part, greatly superior to the English; and, secondly, that this superiority is itself, in large measure, due to Almond's influence. The physical system which has produced such excellent results at Merchiston owed very much to those four years of strenuous work which Almond devoted to that and the other objects of the school, when he was second master there during the years 1858-1862. His relations, also, with Dr. Rogerson, his colleague at Merchiston, and afterwards Headmaster of the school, were at all times close and fruitful. Mr. Wilfrid Richmond, who was for some years a master at Loretto, has mentioned to me the 'lifelong debt' which he himself owed to Almond in connection with that remodelling of the physical system of Glenalmond which he introduced there as Warden about

the year 1881. His able assistant in this work, the sub-warden Mr. Frank Adams, as mentioned on pages 125-7 above, had also been a Loretto master. Mr. Gray of Blairlodge, again, who had for several years such marked success in physical education, learnt most of his ideas with regard to it from his three years' mastership at Loretto. With regard to the Edinburgh Academy the writer may be permitted to state that the physical system introduced there about the year 1890 was no more than the application of Almond's ideas to the problems of day-school life. The following passage, which I quote with permission from Mr. C. C. Cotterill's book, *Suggested Reforms in Public Schools*, shows how the leaven worked in Fettes College :—

'I saw the boys in my own house suffering before my eyes in all sorts of ways from the want of proper and daily outdoor exercise. I endeavoured to communicate to my house-prefects the dissatisfaction with which we ought to regard such a state of things, and the benefits that were likely to come from a very simple reform, and I kept the subject constantly before them. Since the experiment was to be tried in only one portion of the school, I felt that the only chance of carrying out the reform successfully was that the prefects should be induced themselves to undertake it at their own desire, spontaneously, and with the enthusiasm which comes only to those whose conviction is hearty, disinterested, and *from within*. At last, one day, they came to me and said that they could not help noticing what I had noticed—the physical languor and flabbiness of many boys in the house—and that they were convinced it did result from want of regular daily exercise out of doors, and that, in fact, they were very desirous of introducing the reform which I had mentioned to them. The new arrangement may be briefly stated. Every boy, not specially excused, was to *change every day into his flannels and take a minimum of one hour's active exercise out of doors in all weathers*. And the house-prefects were to see that this was done on those days when no games were provided by the school. . . . Our anticipations were exactly fulfilled. The boys who had been lazy and prone to sit over the fire instead of taking active

exercise out of doors, and who, therefore, as we believed, suffered physically, mentally, and morally, took a new start in all directions. And not only was this the result of my observation, but it was felt to be so by the boys themselves. . . . This custom is now prevalent throughout the school, and I believe it would be impossible to overestimate the benefits of all kinds that the boys derive from it.'

Thus of those Scottish public schools which make a serious effort to meet the claims of physical education, there was scarcely one that did not owe Almond a considerable debt. It is to him that the present advanced state of physical culture in these schools is principally due. So far as the labour of achieving it was not performed by himself, it was performed, in the main, by colleagues or pupils whom he had taught, or by friends who owed much to his influence.

But if comparison be made with the practice of English public schools, where custom and athletic competition have been the main factors in physical education, the superiority of a system proceeding upon scientific principles appears most marked. To the uninstructed observer, indeed, each point of advantage in such a system—the careful provision of fresh air in living- and sleeping-rooms as compared with the frequent neglect of such provision*; the daily bath as compared with baths, for two, at least, of the three terms of the year, taken twice a week or less frequently; the habitual eating of right food at right times as compared with the frequent eating of improper food at improper times; the due allowance of sleep as compared with a deficient allowance of it; the scrupulous avoidance of intellectual overwork as compared with the permission or imposition of it; the daily vigorous exercise in all weathers as compared with an exercise system often interfered with by shirking, detention, 'looking on,' and rough weather; the careful avoidance, in connection with such exercise, as we shall remark in a later portion of this chapter, of excessive competitive strains as compared with the ten- or twelve-mile races, such as take place at some of the greater public schools; rational boots and loose

* Some of the defects mentioned in this sentence are now being remedied.

clothing of suitable colour and material as compared with conventional boots and clothing of less convenient cut and less hygienic colour and material; the avoidance for scientific reasons of excessive clothing in schoolrooms and elsewhere in hot weather as compared with the insistence upon excessive clothing during hot weather in schoolrooms and elsewhere upon supposed grounds of discipline;—to the uninstructed observer, I repeat, each one of these points of advantage in a scientific as compared with an unscientific system may appear in itself unimportant. But when combined into one harmonious whole, and applied daily throughout the six or seven years of an ordinary school course, they yield a superiority of physical result which no one could conceive as possible who had not had intimate experience of the actual product of either method. This superiority would be least observable in the case of the most vigorous and manly boys. In the case of some of these, indeed, it would not exist at all. But it would be clearly marked in the case of the average boy, and in the case of the feeble and delicate boy would be most noticeable of all. It was with these last boys, the ‘crops,’ in schoolboy phrase, that Almond, as a health manager, was most concerned. Brilliant as is the roll of athletes which Loretto has produced, it was not with them but with the weaker and less manly boys of the School that his principal successes lay. Mention has already been made of how he would invite such boys to Drumruinie or Inveran. Few things gave him more pleasure than to watch their improvement under the excellent conditions there provided. He had, indeed, in his own words already quoted, an ‘enthusiasm for making delicate boys strong.’ One such delicate boy there was who was a contemporary of my own at Loretto. He had been brought up in India, and arrived at the School swathed in greatcoats and comforters. I remember how carefully and wonderingly we unwound him, and sent him out to drop footballs amid the healthy breezes of the park. That weakling gradually developed into a fairly vigorous man, strong enough for the work of life. He may be taken as a type of many who grew from feebleness to robustness at Loretto, and it is these boys, as has been

said, who were the most distinctive fruit of Almond's system. So great indeed was his success in this field, and so general the recognition of it, that he used to complain that the athletic results of the School, and thereby, in some measure, the credit of his system, had been impaired by the numbers of delicate boys who were confided to his care.

But no success, either with feeble boys or with strong boys, could fill up the measure of Almond's vision of health. His mind was continually reaching forward into the unachieved possibilities of the future. 'I never thought that mediaevals were ideal men,' he writes. '... What I do say is that, with our modern knowledge and appliances, men ought to be reared as superior to us as we are to bushmen.' 'A delicate boy,' he remarks in another place, 'should be as rare as a black swan.' And again: 'There would not be ten delicate children in the country, except from accidents, if the known laws of health were carried out for three generations.' His dream was ever of 'an ideal manhood and womanhood, far exceeding the present and the past in dignity and glory, as well as in length of days and in freedom from disease and pain.'*

It is not pretended that his application of his principles was perfect. Schoolrooms more scientifically planned and ventilated than the Loretto schoolrooms have been erected elsewhere, notably in the United States. More perfect bedrooms than some at Loretto might easily be constructed. Good as the Loretto food-system was, there were periods when, under the rule of an inefficient or dishonest cook, the results did not correspond to the expenditure. On behalf of his system as a whole the claim is not that it was beyond criticism. What, then, is the claim? That at a very early date he approached the problem of physical education from the scientific point of view, that he was probably the first headmaster to eliminate so far as possible from the treatment of that problem the influence of tradition and rule of thumb, the first who endeavoured systematically to apply scientific principles to its solution.

* See the noble sermon in *Christ the Protestant* (Blackwood), on 'The Duty of Strength.'

So far I have endeavoured to describe Almond's work in physical education under its hygienic aspect. But Almond himself was far from thus limiting it. Had he done so, he could scarcely have escaped the charge of promoting that excessive solicitude for mere bodily health which is rightly stigmatised as valetudinarian. His aims were wider. His physical ideal was so closely bound up with his moral ideal that it is impossible to separate them.

And of his moral ideal the most characteristic part was supplied by that 'nameless virtue,' compounded of chastity, of moderation in meat and drink—in a word, of the dutiful control of all bodily habit to which he finely gives the title of 'Temperance writ large.'

Yet more germane to his health notions was his value for courage, for mere bulldog tenacity and headlong gallantry, in the first place, but much more for that rarer quality, blended of the intellectual and the physical, which we call presence of mind.

But in Almond's scheme of ethics no quality existed merely for the satisfaction of its possessor. High physical gifts and splendid physical virtues failed of their effect if they were selfishly enjoyed. They must be devoted to wider issues, must subserve an ampler good, must be dominated by that intense feeling for the general interest which, under the names of *esprit de corps*, public spirit, or the enthusiasm of humanity, penetrated every part of his thought.

Temperance, courage, and *esprit de corps*, then, were the trinity of virtues which all his hygienic arrangements were intended to promote, and together they formed that 'Sparto-Christian ideal' which the more instructed section of the public came to regard as the essential mark of his system.

The reader will now understand the reason of that enthusiastic advocacy of the athletic movement with which his name was so much associated. His support of that movement, indeed, was by no means uniform. Some of the most popular events of public school sports—ten- or twelve-mile races, for instance, or four-mile steeplechases—met with his hearty disapproval. Even of the mile and

the quarter-mile as races for boys he had grave doubts during his later years. He feared they might cause injurious strain, and of strain he was the resolute foe. Nor was his antagonism to the worship of mere athletic prowess, so banefully prominent at many schools, less strong. He had no liking for the 'swaggering barbarian who represents the evil side of athletics.' Mere athletic skill, if unassociated with charm or force of character, gave a boy but little place at Loretto. Again, he never lost an opportunity of protesting against the influence of the 'gallery' in modern athletics. Games, in his opinion, were to be played for the benefit of the players. To turn them into a show for the amusement of the spectators was to lose sight of the end in view. Not less resolute was his opposition to all needless luxury and expense in sport. It was not until the year 1880 that he would allow any special decorations for members of the Eleven or Fifteen. Even then these badges were of the simplest kind. He steadily declined the offer of a good pavilion at Pinkie, and the scattered assortment of sheep-sheds, brick shanties, and wild beasts' cages which served for Loretto boys the purpose of such a building, surprised visitors from other schools, accustomed to more elaborate provisions. In a similar spirit he did his best to discountenance the luxurious lunches which at one time threatened to become fashionable in Scottish cricket.

But of all the modern perversions of athletics as he regarded them, none excited his disapproval more keenly than the custom of club football tours. The overstrain of four or five football matches played in rapid succession, and the luxury in eating and excess in drinking scarcely separable from the big dinners with which these matches are often interspersed, contradicted all his ideas of legitimate sport.

But with these safeguards and provisos, he threw himself heartily into the cause of athletics, and that upon grounds far deeper than would occur to the man in the street. The following paragraph taken from his article, entitled 'Football as a Moral Agent,' and published in the *Nineteenth Century* for December 1893, afford an apt

illustration of his views with regard to them and their relation to wholesome living:—

‘Surely whatever tends to quicken the circulation, to raise the spirits, and to purify the blood is, *ipso facto*, a moral agent. This is so at all ages, but it is more especially the case during the age of boyhood. It is an incalculable blessing to this country that such a sport is so enthusiastically beloved by almost all that part of our boyhood whom Nature has endowed with strong passions and overflowing energies. Its mere existence and the practical lessons which it preaches are worth all the books that have been written on youthful purity. I can say for myself that, under the circumstances of the luxurious and self-indulgent habits in which boys are increasingly brought up at home, the constant panic lest they should suffer any pain, the absence of apprehension lest their moral and physical fibre should become feeble by disuse, and the tendency of the examination system to make the development of character a secondary consideration, I would not care to face the responsibility of conducting a school were there not rooted in it as, I hope, an imperishable tradition, an enthusiastic love of football.’

The above characteristic quotation forms a natural introduction to the remarks which yet fall to be made in this chapter. These remarks have reference, in the first place, to Almond’s attitude towards questions of health as they concern the primary school. The total neglect of the plainest considerations of health in the board schools which the Scottish Act of 1872 called into existence, filled Almond with astonishment. He became a member of the first Musselburgh school board, and in an early meeting proposed, as a preliminary measure, that half an hour should be devoted daily to physical drill. The chairman heard him for a few minutes with patience, and then, with the amused air of a man who dismisses an amiable crotchet, said: ‘Do you not think, gentlemen, that it is time we should get to practical business?’ Almond, however, was not to be thus put down, and so long as his connection with the Musselburgh board continued, the experiment

was tried. But in Scotland no less than in England the day of common-sense in the education of the masses was not yet. 'They soon won't have a child fit to breed from in the country,' is Almond's despairing cry as many as twelve years later, and the utterance shows how habitually he regarded such questions from the point of national survival. In the same letter, however, he recognises a gleam of hope in the rise of 'football, counteracting the thing they call "education,"' and nothing gave him greater pleasure than his reading of an article* by Mr. Sharples, giving an account of the rise and results of the football movement which has since spread so widely among national schools.

Of physical instruction as apart from athletics Almond was an eager advocate in all schools, but especially in primary schools, on account of the greater ignorance of the children attending them.

'One of the most, if not the most, important subjects of instruction,' he remarks in 1900 in his answers to questions proposed by the Royal Commission on Physical Education (Scotland), 'is what I may call the science of life; the importance of pure air, and how it is to be secured; the laws of heat economy, and how they are to be observed; the physiology of exercise, and the evils both of excess and defect; the way in which common maladies, such as chills, can be avoided by its means; the reasons why any hard exercise should be taken in flannel, and not in any cotton fabrics; something of the chemistry of food, and of the secretions which help digestion, and the practical rules deducible from such knowledge. All these things are more important for boys (and girls) to know than the dates of the kings, or the nature of adverbial clauses. If such an education as this were given in all schools, as a necessary and prominent part of education, we would no longer hear of children in the Highlands and other country parts being fed on tea and white bread and tinned meats; of the consequent want of freshness and rosiness

* See *Special Reports on Educational Subjects* (Eyre and Spottiswoode), vol. ii. 1898.

and hardiness of the present generation ; nor would children be kept at schools in towns during winter months with little more open-air exercise than what they get by climbing up and driving on a tram-car.'

To the common attitude of the Scottish universities upon questions of health Almond was always in vigorous opposition. The enthusiasm of professors for the application of science to the dead body or to machines, and their apparent indifference to its bearing upon the physical welfare of the student himself, was a continual puzzle to him. With that strong practicality of intelligence which was characteristic of him he deemed it more important that the university should 'act science' than 'teach science.' 'Surely I may appeal to you,' he writes to the principal of a technical college where it was reported that class-rooms were often ill-aired and the difficulty of getting exercise extreme, 'whether of all the machines you have to deal with the human machine is not the most important.' Again, with reference to the famous celebration in Edinburgh: 'I wonder if any one will speak one word of sense at the approaching Tercentenary. That University is working its medicals to death.' Nor could he conceive of any literary acquisition as compensating a man for the loss of health. 'They made [English literature] a compulsory subject at Glasgow (thank God, after my time!),' he writes to Mr. Charles Russell, Professor of that branch of study at the Presidency College, Calcutta, 'and put it at 3 P.M. . . . Class-room at 3 P.M. ! One subject more to make eyes fishier, and nerves feebler, and chest narrower, to make high spirits and vigour impossible ! Now you know why I hate English literature as a subject.'

Reference has already been made to the service which Almond rendered to the cause of physical health in Scottish universities when in 1875 he threw himself into the movement for providing an athletic field for Edinburgh University, till then unfortunately without one. In conjunction with his former pupil, Dr. C. W. Cathcart, then a student and Secretary of the University Field Committee, he spent many an afternoon in search of a suitable site. It was he,

Dr. Cathcart informs me, who actually selected the field at Corstorphine which was for seventeen years the home of University athletics. It was he also who succeeded in gaining for the scheme the hearty support of the Principal of the University, Sir Alexander Grant, who, like himself, had been a student of Balliol College. Twenty years after the provision of this first field the efforts of many public-spirited men succeeded in purchasing for the University the excellent field at Craiglockhart which has been so great a boon to the students. This larger enterprise has, in some measure, drowned the recollection of its humbler predecessor. But lovers of health will not fail to perceive the importance of the earlier movement, which secured the first recognition on the part of Scottish university authorities of the principle that the university has responsibility for the physical well-being of the students. 'Few who enjoy the Craiglockhart field,' writes Dr. Cathcart, 'are aware how much they owe to the pioneer spirit who found out the first field, and was so leading a member of the committee for its establishment.'

Mention has been made elsewhere of the part which Almond took in defeating the proposal for erecting a Natural Philosophy Laboratory upon the recreation ground at Glasgow University. To the account previously given it is not necessary to add anything here.

But Almond's enthusiasm for health looked far beyond the special needs of school or college. To him from the very commencement of his scholastic career physical health and its kindred virtues were national questions, and for the nation questions of life and death. The experience of forty years has convinced thoughtful men of the present day that, from the point of view of national health, the latter half of the Victorian era was a period of decadence. The blind absorption of the public mind in the production of material wealth, and the reckless neglect, more especially in the building of the poorer quarters of cities, of those laws of physical well-being which are at the basis of life itself have produced (it is now seen) for our generation problems which are almost insoluble. What is apparent

to thinkers of to-day Almond was always preaching in the 'sixties,' often with none but a few boys to listen to him. 'Fools that they are!' he would cry to us, as the high-built tenements ate up the open spaces near Edinburgh. 'Their grandsons will be eager to pull down what they are building up so busily.' The shallowness of Macaulay who glorified the epoch, the blindness of Gladstone who celebrated it as a period of 'leaps and bounds,' were, as we have seen, frequent subjects of his talk. It was impossible for him to share in the public satisfaction. To him the period of 'leaps and bounds' was a time of deep discouragement. He suffered much from the bitterness, of which Dr. Arnold also complained, of having many thoughts in his heart and finding none to hearken. His sphere of influence was, indeed, sadly limited. For the first ten years the School was small and struggling. English headmasters have no conception of the difficulty of building up a Scottish public school. The strangeness of Almond's ideas enhanced the labour. At last success came, but in a form which exposed him to much misunderstanding. Loretto, as has been chronicled, became famous as an athletic School. Nothing in the history of his endeavours gave Almond so much encouragement as these athletic successes. He had all a sportsman's pleasure in winning a championship, but, in a far deeper sense, he hailed them as affording a popular demonstration of the correctness of his ideas upon physical education. More and more, as time went on, the School became to him important merely as a lever for effecting a revolution in the physical habits of the nation, and, as will be set forth in the following chapter, in its attitude of mind towards social questions. But none felt more keenly how short a lever that was to do anything towards moving so huge a mass. Nor could he achieve much with his pen. His efforts to conquer an entry into the London press on such subjects were, in early years, unavailing. One admirable article on 'Athletics and Education,' indeed, he succeeded in getting into *Macmillan's Magazine* for 1881. A couple of excellent lectures were delivered for the Edinburgh Health Society in 1884,

but such contributions are little read. Nine years later his article on 'Football a Moral Agent' attracted much attention both at home and in New Zealand. But the gist of the article is contained in an excerpt from a previous rejected article written in 1868 or 1869. The *Scotsman* newspaper deserves the thanks of all friends of the causes he had at heart for its steady insertion of his letters. But to the general public of Edinburgh these communications were, for many years, little more than 'that man Almond's hawering.' Gradually, however, the intrinsic good sense of his writing won its way. Colin Mackenzie's remark that either he was changing his opinions, or Almond was becoming less of a lunatic, may be taken as descriptive of the slowly changing attitude of the Edinburgh mind with regard to him. But the modifying influence in Colin Mackenzie's case was conversation, and it is probable that more was done by this means and by private letters to parents, schoolmasters, and others interested in his theories* than by any publications of the first thirty years of his headmastership.

During the last ten years of his life the steady movement of public opinion in the direction of his main ideas, and his own greater leisure enabled him to gain much wider currency for his views. The *Times* and the *Spectator* and the principal magazines were now open to him, and the freshness and vigour of everything he wrote secured him an indulgent audience.

Yet, when all is said, Almond's literary remains are of the scantiest. The School itself is the chief monument of his ideas upon health as upon other subjects.

* Among these correspondents none was more important than Lord Balfour of Burleigh, who sent me a bundle of Almond's letters, from which I would gladly have made selection, but unfortunately they arrived too late for publication.

CHAPTER XVII

‘LORETTONIANISM,’ OR RATIONALITY IN DAILY HABIT

FEW men, not professed thinkers, are aware of the extent to which life in civilised communities is dominated by custom. It is assumed that men are free agents, bound each to select the course in life that commends itself to his individual conscience. It is even held to be a reproach to a man that he should be content to follow the herd. Yet, as a matter of fact, the great majority of us accept a scheme of life with the framing of which we ourselves have had nothing to do. It is made for us by custom, by the habit of the world in which we live. Wordsworth in a famous passage speaks of the ‘years’ as bringing this ‘inevitable yoke,’ and ascribes the happiness of the child to his exemption from it. But even in childhood Society has begun her task of discipline. Ere manhood is reached, the process is complete. Society has subjected her son.

It would be beyond the scope of my present purpose to follow the argument into the more important provinces of life; to trace the influence of custom, for instance, upon our systems of religion, or in the sphere of law. We shall find a readier example, and one more germane to the matter of this chapter, if we glance for a moment at the spectacle presented by the life of the modern professional man in a city. How minute and comprehensive is the regulation to which Society submits him! Society dictates the nature of the hat he shall wear, the colour and material of his shirt and collar, the texture and colour of his coat, the cut of his nether garments. She prescribes the sort of table he shall keep, the kind of entertainments he shall give, the various wines and liqueurs he shall proffer at these, and, in general, the scale of his establishment. So continual is

the pressure which she exercises, so habitually has it been applied from the first dawn of life, that most of us pass our time in complete unconsciousness that there is any pressure at all. The ways of the world in which we live supply the standard to which we refer everything. Life is with us a personally conducted tour. Not only have we lost the power of independent choice: even the faculty of independent vision has been destroyed. Like the Chinese in Hans Andersen's pleasant fable, we have lost the power of seeing things as they are. Thus a man will gravely assure you that he is never so comfortable as in silk hat, frock-coat, and high collar, although the misery inflicted by these garments, at all times considerable to the man accustomed to a more rational costume, is, during hot weather, even to the habituated, extreme; and ladies will declare that, not only for beauty but for ease, the shoe with high heel and pointed toe—the shoe of fashion, hideous to the instructed eye, agonising to the unperverted foot—leaves nothing to be desired. It is not denied that there are a certain number of men and some women who are aware that there is such a thing as the tyranny of fashion; that bad customs are none the less bad that they are generally followed; that truth of habit is a thing to aim at no less than truth of word. But these persons are few in number and, for the most part, inconsiderable in influence. They do not as yet constitute a world of their own to set against 'the world.' Even if I have their sympathy, the mass of conventional opinion is so great and so serenely inexpugnable that I confess to no little alarm, as I take pen in hand to give an account of the most characteristic work of an intellect which, in this sphere, was wholly unconventionalised.

For, cautious as Almond was in action (and, so far as I know, he never took any important step in the way of realising his ideas which he was obliged to retract), in the tone and temper of his mind he was utterly at variance with the spirit of the society which I have endeavoured to describe. Not only did he deny the claim of that society to regulate the individual life, he spent much of his time in demonstrating the absurdity and even wickedness of the

regulations which Society ordains. ‘People have got so full of the idea that it is an enlightened age,’ he writes, ‘that they won’t look upon it from the outside, and see what “guffaws” future ages will indulge in at our absurd ways of living and thinking.’ Nor did he confine himself to demonstrations and denials. He conceived the idea (let me whisper it softly) of an organised attack upon the presiding genius of conventional society, an assault upon the potent and venerable Mrs. Grundy herself, an assault which he would have pushed even so far as to the actual ejection of that lady from her high position, and her consignment to the limbo where abide, as we may fancy, the outworn deities of discarded worships, strange births of the elder world, portentous shapes :

Gorgons and Hydras and Chimeras dire.

When I consider the vast influence which Mrs. Grundy exercises over the minds of the ruder sex, and her scarce limited control of the convictions and sentiments of our fairer sisters, I am lost in wonder at Almond’s courage in essaying so formidable an enterprise. That an Englishman in Scotland, one of the despised race of schoolmasters, Headmaster, too, of a small and struggling School, and that School situated almost in the shadow of the stately city which has been described as the peculiar appanage of Mrs. Grundy, the brightest jewel in her diadem, should actually take order for the overthrow of the Pagod of the region, and the putting up in her stead of I know not what Goddess of Reason—all this seems at first sight so utterly absurd. The disproportion between the pettiness of the means and the magnitude of the end is so glaring. There is a Jack-the-Giant-Killer touch about the whole design.

Yet for all that, this crusade of Almond against the power of custom in human affairs (for to that pitch he carried it) was a natural development of his work in the production of a fine physique. It was no more than the extension to the domain of social habit as a whole of that rule of right reason which he had already established at Loretto in the sphere of physical habit. Indeed, in the sphere of

physical habit itself it was impossible to make much advance without offending the conventional spirit. 'In trying to come to the truth about how to rear a good animal,' he writes, 'I have found myself so constantly thwarted by Mrs. Grundy that I have got perhaps an inordinate hatred of her influence.' The hatred was inevitable. The feud between the scientific temper and the conventional temper admits of no pacification. It is an age-long strife between principles essentially opposed.

The contrast between the victorious liberty of Science in her task of perfecting the mechanical surroundings of life and her feeble and hampered action when she endeavours to improve the habits of life itself, was a frequent subject of Almond's thought. The following is taken from a letter of 1883 to Canon Tristram :—

'There are plenty of things known the adoption of which would make men ever so much happier and longer lived, and which could be carried out, had the men to be improved no voice in the matter. I am afraid if steam-engines had had wills, we should never have got far beyond the days of Watt. Each new-looking engine would have said : "Do you think I am going about the country like that, to be jeered at by the rest? And as for steel rails—why, who ever heard of anything but iron? Ha! Ha! Ha!" And then the æsthetic element among them would have sacrificed all their running powers to the idea of how they would look.'

Why should not Science (the writer seems to ask) be as free to regulate the habits of the man as to arrange the details of his machines? 'What can Science do for the surroundings of life,' as he phrases it elsewhere, 'at all comparable to what she can do for the life of the man himself?' But before any progress can be made in this direction, the power of convention in such matters must be broken. Mrs. Grundy must be dethroned. 'I love any one who resists Mrs. Grundy,' he writes, 'because it is my Holy War.' It was as a free company enrolled in that Sacred War that for the last twenty years of his life he chiefly conceived of Loretto.

In this work, as in his kindred effort in the province of health, Almond was indeed far from confining his interests to the School itself. In sermons, in letters, in conversations with boys and parents and masters, he was, as has been said, continually inveighing against the spirit of conventional society—the slavish temper that has no eye of its own for beauty, or convenience, or pleasure, but thinks, and feels, and admires with the fashionable crowd. As a specimen of his manner in such diatribes I may quote the following from a letter to his wife, written in the cool solitudes of Sutherland :—

‘The irrationality of mankind, especially in hot weather, vexes my spirit, and I am well to be out of it. Do look at picture in *Illustrated* of Cup Day at Ascot. Could anything be conceived more odious and irrational? Look at that woman in front, simpering, idiotic, insolent, hideous! And look at the men, black even to ties, portentous in their starched and blasé solemnity!’

But keener even than his abhorrence of the fashionable temper was his hatred of that reverence for routine, and ‘regulation,’ and red-tape, which has recently been exhibited to the nation as the informing spirit of military fiasco. The disasters of the Boer war gave him an opportunity for public utterances on this question, specimens of which are given elsewhere. But the following unpublished fragment is so happily characteristic of the scientific temper in special assault upon the spirit of official pedantry that it is worth transcribing here :—

‘A woman may be rational—a soldier never.* . . . He teaches men so to move their legs as to take miles off their walking power; so to ride that their insides are shaken into indigestion; so to carry their hands (I believe this is altered now) as to lose the help of the natural free swing of the arms; he cramps their breathing organs, chokes their throats, irritates their chins with straps, puts weights on their heads, and tries to deform their feet and waists. Because loose clothing is cooler in warm weather and

* Needless to say it is not the efficient officer or official that is satirised here.—
R. J. M.

warmer in cold, he makes tightness a condition of smartness, and smartness a test of efficiency. He wastes men's time and spoils their tempers with button-polishing and pipe-claying, and makes them hate God by church parades. He insisted on the officers, the supposed brains of the regiment, exposing themselves to unnecessary destruction and disablement, till it was found that no officer could survive. Even now he refuses them rifles. He preferred British cavalry horses to Basuto ponies (and docks the tails of the poor beasts, so that they cannot protect themselves from flies), and selected infantry to catch mounted Boers in rocky fastnesses. He teaches simultaneous volley-firing at the invisible, and finds salvation in mathematical lines. He so arranges his guns that a shell can disable two at once. But his intervals are precise. He is a slave to correctness, like the imaginary picture of Eden in Macaulay. He is selected by tests which are as rational as if a Professor of Philosophy was chosen for pole-jumping, and, after a process in which he has been taught not to think but to cram, and during which he has been deprived of fresh air and exercise during almost all the hours of daylight for the most crucial years of growth and development, naturally it comes to pass that rationality, initiative, and individuality have as much chance of flourishing in a mess-room, or being rewarded by military officials, as an iris has of flowering under a bramble bush, or being admired by a cow.'

To recur to Loretto—it is evident that a school of which the governing principle was rationality as opposed to usage could not but be eccentric in habits of life. But in the early days of the School, before Loretto ways were accepted as characteristic and picturesque, there was scarcely a friend or leading pupil of Almond who did not urge him to abandon his 'eccentric practices.' 'Why irritate people,' we used to say, 'with these petty peculiarities? A boy may be better without a cap in most Scotch weather, and cooler golfing without a coat in summer; white flannel may be the best material to dress in, and a linen collar a thing for state occasions only. But are your improvements in such matters worth the trouble of maintaining them? Is the

play in these cases worth the candle it consumes?’ It is clear, however, that if Loretto was to afford an example of a School ‘visibly living according to the principles of right reason,’ it could not allow conventional opinion to govern the habits of its boys. The practices to which reference has been made above were, no doubt, trivial in themselves, but they were the necessary fruit of the scientific spirit at work upon the habits of boy-life. They could not be abandoned in deference to mere prejudice. To abandon them would be to give up the whole position ; to close the door upon the interesting experiment in living and training to live upon which Almond was engaged.

Nor must we fail to recognise the educational effect which such actions were calculated to have upon the minds of the boys themselves. More than any other teacher of his day Almond aimed at imparting an intellectual temper to his boys—to wit, the scientific spirit which I have endeavoured to portray. This temper tended to permeate every province of his thought, but it was in the sphere of social habit that he realised it most clearly. The scientific spirit in application to the habits of life—this was the temper that he desired to engraft in us. So much did he hold it to be of the essence of his message that he frequently refers to it under the name of ‘Lorettonianism.’ Loretto was to be a community ‘visibly living according to the dictates of science, or right reason.’ ‘Lorettonianism’ was the informing principle of such a community. As John Wesley in the schools he founded endeavoured to possess boys with the spirit of Methodism ; as Jesuit Fathers seek to imbue them with a selfless devotion to the Roman Church ; as Arnold desired to give them ‘moral thoughtfulness,’ so Almond strove to train them to the scientific temper in special application to the habits of daily life. But without the training of specific acts of reasonable nonconformity, the scientific temper, as we are considering it, could not be produced. It must remain an academic aspiration. It could not take rank as a living principle of action. Hence the importance of unconventional ways as producing a type of character, the type of the courageous

reformer of irrational custom, the true 'Lorettonian,' as Almond conceived him. 'It is by proving to boys, in the concrete' (he wrote to me in 1885), 'the successfulness of minor and well-judged revolts that you embolden them to play their part in what I believe will be the next great revolution, viz. the transference of the empire over daily life from custom to reason.'

The reader will now perceive what good reason I had to entertain the spirit of timidity to which I confessed in the early part of this chapter. The 'transference of the empire over daily life from custom to reason'—why, the change is as vast as the wresting of liberty from the Czar. And he will train his 'Jamies' and 'Charlies' to play their part in so momentous an upheaval! Under the very nose of the Honourable Company he, with his little band of sunburnt stalwarts, is 'preparing the revolution.' How difficult to get sensible people to believe that the subject of this biography actually imagined such a design! The plan is so utterly at variance with our common British method of progress, our safe and easy mode of transacting with the spirit of change. For we, too, in our own way (we would point out) are not averse to change. On the contrary, are we not (or were we not until the other day?) the standing example of a truly progressive people? There is but one thing we insist upon—that improvement should always be made on the ground of some practical expediency; that it should never be pursued in application of a large principle. But here was a man who grasped a large principle, with applications bearing on every part of life, and himself set to work to apply it in his little seed-plot of a School.

Yet if sanction were needed for the principle itself, it would be easy to find it in some of the best-known pages of our philosophers. 'The despotism of custom,' writes Mill in his accepted work on *Liberty*, 'is everywhere the standing hindrance to human advancement, being in unceasing antagonism to that disposition to aim at something better than customary, which is called, according to circumstances, the spirit of liberty, or that of progress or improvement.'

And again: ‘The progressive principle in either shape, whether as the love of liberty or of improvement, is antagonistic to the sway of custom, involving at least emancipation from that yoke.’ These passages contain a reference at least to the domain of social habit. But Mill’s bias was towards politics and religion, and in the final chapter on ‘Applications’ no reference is made to the social bearings of the doctrine. But as early as the year 1854, Herbert Spencer, in an article entitled ‘Manners and Fashion’ and published in the *Westminster Review* for April of that year, had drawn out the application of the doctrine of liberty to the sphere of social life, and shown, with all the wealth of instance which is characteristic of his writing, the place of eccentricity in social change. He referred to the need of a ‘protestantism in social usage’ if the unreasonable customs of society were ever to be modified; and pointed to ‘combination’ as the method which, as in the earlier struggles for political and religious freedom, was likely to be successful in winning social liberty and promoting social improvement, where individual effort might fail. Such a combination to foster the principle of progress Loretto was. Such a ‘protestantism in social usage’ Loretto ways embodied.

No paper I have read has so direct a bearing as this essay of Spencer upon the principal work of Almond’s life. But for several reasons it is more than probable that it was read by Almond for the first time in the edition of the *Essays* which is to be found in his library, and which was not published until 1883. In regard to all this doctrine of liberty and rationality for which he stood, Almond’s master was Mill. It was on Mill’s famous plea for eccentricity that he would often base the defence of his own institution of unusual ways. It was from Mill’s eloquent championship of freedom, from his weighty presage of stagnation, that he derived that hatred of the slavish temper which was characteristic of his thought. He offers a rare example of a practical reformer deeply penetrated with the spirit of a philosophic ideal. ‘Custom’ (he seems to say) ‘is the true source of the shocking condition of human affairs. It is the power of custom that thwarts all detailed efforts for

improvement. I will devote my life to an attack upon this central stronghold of our misery. I shall create a School, small indeed in numbers, but in spirit and purpose not small, which shall present a picture of a community to the utmost limits of its power conceding nothing to the spirit of mere usage, of a community' (to use once more his phrase) 'visibly living according to the dictates of right reason.'

It was a most audacious scheme, yet, within the limits which practice and the personal equation impose on all ideas, most faithfully and skilfully carried out. Nor can it be doubted that it has had a measure of success but rarely accorded to the imaginative conceptions of the children of light. Almond's ideas of health and hardiness—ideas which were the early fruit of the scientific temper at work in the sphere of physical education—have had wide influence, as has been shown, in Scotland; they have been carried thence to England and the English universities; they have been adopted in New Zealand. Feeble and despised, more particularly in Scotland, when he first advocated them, under pressure of many causes and as a result of the efforts of many workers, they have grown to be dominant ideas, pushing into wider and ever wider fields. Yet we are but at the beginning of their reign: the chief applications have still to be made. So with the later development of the scientific temper which we have been studying in this chapter, his campaign for rationality in the habits of daily life, there are, in the first place, some results to show. In my early days at Loretto the conventional boot still held the field. Even as late as 1873, it was most eccentric to be seen in the streets of Edinburgh in knickerbockers or white flannels. It was an unheard-of thing, except among Loretto boys, to take off the coat at golf. Old gentlemen still played golf at Musselburgh in hard, black hats. The disuse of the cap on road or Links was, save by us, a thing unknown. Now boots are of a more reasonable shape; dress is freer and more sensible; in most forms of athletics the use of the cap or coat is optional. And of this advance in reasonableness and social liberty Almond was the pioneer. He contributed to it more than any other man.

Yet compared with the scope of his project, these are but poor instalments of reform. A gain in comfort and convenience of costume, won for a section of the upper class, even if we take along with it the loosening of conventional control and the increase of mental liberty which such a gain implies, are but inconsiderable results of a movement which aims at the ‘transference of the empire over daily life from custom to reason.’ Once more a touch of disproportion baffles us. We have a sense of labouring mountains and an issuing mouse. Yet inconsiderable as these trophies are, they have the importance which all first-fruits of a large idea possess. ‘The despotism of custom,’ says Mill, ‘is everywhere the standing hindrance of human advancement.’ In religion, in politics, in education, in everything we do, or think, or say, it lays its benumbing hand upon us. The intense practicality of Almond’s mind, fastening on physical penalties paid, on physical sufferings endured, directed his life-work to the domain of daily habit. Here he saw a vast field for the application of the scientific temper, the spirit of rationality, of which I have spoken so much. The dictum of the philosopher took shape in action, which contrived to maintain itself, and has definite results to show. A specimen has been exhibited of ‘a community visibly living according to the dictates of right reason,’ or, at least, endeavouring so to live. An instance has been given of combination to effect a change in fashions—combination which has had its measure of success. The little movement may grow into something large. These poor instalments of reform are to be regarded as the first drops of the thunder-shower which may yet refresh the arid realms of convention. At the very least, a large idea has stepped forth into the field of practice, has been displayed there in a picturesque setting. And who shall limit the power of the idea, working in long periods of time, to modify the thoughts and ways of men?

CHAPTER XVIII

INTELLECTUAL ATTITUDE

VISITORS to Loretto meeting Almond for the first time were struck by nothing so much as the vividness of his intellectual life. 'He was a unique instance,' writes Mr. Charles Russell, 'of a man who was continuously and completely alive.' Distrusting received opinions in every field, seeking always for first principles, treating each conclusion arrived at as a mere base for further advance, he was, as Mr. Russell again observes, "'made up of an intensest life," and seemed to have the gift of immortal youth.'

This evergreen vivacity of the intellect was nourished from wide pastures. As mentioned in the second chapter of this work, Almond had been most distinguished at Glasgow University, and had taken the highest honours in both classics and mathematics at Oxford. He was widely read in science. He was keenly interested in theology and Biblical criticism. He had an exceptional knowledge of contemporary politics. He was a lover of music. 'One of the several atmospheres in which he daily lived,' writes Mr. Oliphant Smith, 'was that of the best literature.' Nor is it difficult to trace the source of his inspiration. To Oxford, more particularly to the river at Oxford, he owed the enthusiasm for health and public spirit which was the motive of much of his most characteristic work ; but in the keenness and range of his intellectual vision, in the joyous and masterful play of his mental faculties, he was a true son of the Glasgow University of his day. Buchanan was his sponsor : Ramsay was his intellectual foster-father.

With a mental endowment of this nature—an endowment of which freedom is the first necessity—it was inevitable that he should find himself at odds with the present system

of intellectual education. At Glasgow, in Almond's day, written examinations, if indeed they at all existed, were a quite subordinate feature of the training. The professor in that fortunate seat of learning had then but one object—to impart to his pupils through the medium of the studies of his chair the gift of intellectual life. A similar freedom and simplicity was enjoyed by schools (such as the Edinburgh High School, or Edinburgh Academy of that day) which prepared their pupils for the Scottish universities. But when Almond found himself Headmaster of Loretto, for Scottish schools of the public school type the educational centre had shifted to England. Such schools, if they were to maintain themselves against their English rivals, must look to the English universities. And the requirements of the English universities (not their Entrance or Scholarship Examinations merely, but the aptitudes demanded by a system which frankly makes examinational success the sole object of the student) obliged them to make it their chief aim to impart to their pupils not the gift of intellectual life, the noble gift of those who care for the things of the mind, but the skill of the examinee. It may be said that the two objects are not incompatible, that success in examinations is most easily won by those teachers who create in the minds of their pupils an interest in the subjects studied. But the kind of interest useful to enable a boy to master a subject for examinational purposes is quite a different thing from the wide-ranging intellectual life and power which was the aim of a Ramsay or a Buchanan. Upon this latter spirit—the true intellectual temper—competitive examinations exert a baneful influence. A brief observation of ordinary public school teaching would convince the reader of this, but, if he would learn the full extent of the mischief, let him betake himself to the study of an extreme instance, and become a master upon a public school army side. Here, notoriously, the spirit of culture is killed quite dead. The teacher cannot spare the time necessary to impart a temper or train a faculty. The most intelligent boys will listen to nothing which cannot be turned into marks. In a word,

education has degenerated into 'cram.' It is by acquiescing in this degradation that the public school army classes have held their own against the 'crammers.' They have been compelled to meet their rivals with their own weapons. They have become 'crammers' themselves.

But it is not to the Army Examinations alone that we must look for the causes of the intellectual materialisation which has overtaken the public schools. The struggle for scholarships at Oxford and Cambridge is no less keen than the competition for places on the Woolwich and Sandhurst lists, and attracts a larger proportion of the best intellect of the schools. In each case the boys are working for a material prize, and, by this very fact, the whole spirit of their work is changed. But the rivalry between the public schools themselves is intense, and this rivalry has led to a further development. University scholarships cannot be won save by boys of exceptional ability. To attract such boys at the age of thirteen the endowments of the greater schools were early diverted from their original purposes, and offered as mere money prizes for general competition. The lesser schools in self-defence were compelled to hold out similar inducements, and thus has been created a vast system of trade bonuses, for which the little representatives of the preparatory schools contend.

In their pursuit of this course the public schools were but following the example of the universities. The college scholarships no less than the public school scholarships, are, in their most important aspect, trade bonuses whereby the colleges compete with each other for the ability resident in the schools. But the college scholarships are offered to boys of eighteen, for whose general education the schools have had a dozen years to provide. The age of the entrants renders them reasonably fit for the strain of examination, and everything that wisdom and experience can suggest has been done, more especially at Oxford, to encourage sound culture in the competitors, and to discourage overwork and 'cram.' No similar regard for the interest of their entrants has hampered the policy of the public schools. The tender age of the competitors—about

thirteen on an average—unfits them for the strain of an exacting examination ; and in the anxiety to secure, at this early age, a high degree of specialised aptitude, the intellectual welfare of the candidates—the mere counters in this game of commerce—has too often been left out of sight. Efforts have been made by the Preparatory Schoolmasters' Association to secure an examination less injurious to the minds of their young charges. The writer was present at a meeting of the Public School Headmasters' Conference in 1898 when the question was debated. The injury is flagrant and could scarcely be denied. But all arguments of an ideal character have proved powerless against the consideration that the early specialised boys are the most successful in the winning of college scholarships. The abuse remains unremedied.

No circumstance could better illustrate the extent to which, on the intellectual side, competition has vulgarised the spirit of our education. In physique and the physical virtues the English public school boy need fear no foreign rival. Regarded as a moral product, the nation is justly proud of him. But the best friends of the system which produces him will, in all probability, be the last to maintain that, in respect of the intellectual life of the abler boys, the late reign has witnessed an advance. When we read Mr. Morley's account of Mr. Gladstone's youthful studies at Eton, what is it that most impresses us ? Not the height of young Gladstone's attainment, remarkable though that was. It is probable that the future statesman's Latin prose and critical scholarship would have shown no marked superiority to the performances in these subjects of the Balliol scholars of the present year. Nor yet the width of his interests. The minuteness of classical study in modern schools may be set against a vast amount of desultory reading. What strikes us is that the essential spirit of his study is strange to us. Subjects are assailed for their own sakes. It is a genuine love of learning that fires his enthusiasm. No touch of sordid afterthought corrupts the singleness of his intellectual aim.

How different is the genius of our modern system ! It

is completely permeated with the fever of the competitive examination and the taint of the money prize. Intellectual stimulus and the attraction of the subject are less and less the motive forces of progress. Their place has been taken by a fierce struggle between boy and boy, enforced, in all but the highest classes, by a weekly system of marks. The continual multiplication of studies, the academic enlargement of subjects, the steady raising of standards, forbid the leisure without which true intellectual power cannot be produced. From the lowest form in the preparatory school to the highest form in the public school the abler boys are working—often beyond the limit of their strength—for ambitious gratifications and pecuniary rewards. But rarely do the Muses visit the desecrated shrine. The coarse arbitrament of the Examination List reigns over all.

At the university, indeed, the influence of the money prize disappears, and the pressure of daily competition is relaxed. But not here any more than at the public school are subjects studied, as the scholar studies them, for their own sake. The terror of the class-list is upon all hearts. The multiplication of studies and academic enlargement of subjects, above referred to, have produced curricula which cannot be compassed by old-fashioned modes of industry. The skilful teacher must devise compendious methods, must discover short cuts through the labyrinth. It is not profound study that wins the day, but the arts of brief committal and rapid output. Here, as at the public school, material ambition is at war with the spirit of culture; a feverish hurry saps the sources of true power. And thus is formed that most distressing product of the English universities—a student facile, business-like, shallow; with the aptitudes of culture highly developed and the spirit of culture left out; one whose true interests are in golf and cricket, who cares nothing for the things of the mind; an artisan not an artist; a Philistine turned scholar for a price.

It is not pretended that this unpleasant growth is the sole yield of the English universities. It may be even admitted that, in its perfect manifestations, the type is rare. At the

universities, as at the schools, there are some teachers and some students whom the system cannot subordinate. The latter often lose their university honours, but they keep their intellectual souls. Even among the many who devote themselves frankly to the *grösser* aim there are some in whom the seed of intellectual life is dormant merely, and bears fruit when they quit the university. After all, the student is at work in the field of knowledge, and, in spite of all vulgarising influences, the potent spirit of the masters of the mind still makes itself felt. But a system which finds the motive of study in material inducements—scholarships, prizes, honours—cannot produce the harvest of a method which follows culture for its own sake. The fruits of Philistia are not the fruits of the Garden of the Lord. In the intellectual sphere no less than in the religious sphere, the spirit of Mammon is hostile to the spirit of life. It is to this deep source that we must trace the barrenness, so often deplored, of the English universities in all manner of original work ; to this also that we must ascribe, in large measure, the disappearance among us of those creative minds which were the pride of former periods.

Were it the purpose of this chapter to give a complete account of the present method of intellectual education, stress might be laid upon its more favourable aspects ; upon the extent, for instance, to which it has cultivated the industry of the ordinary boy, and the business habits which it has thereby promoted among intellects which might have gained little from a loftier procedure. Attention has been called to the inherent defects of the system—its disbelief in the possibility of imbuing the student with a love of learning for its own sake ; its faith in ambitious inducements and pecuniary attractions as the working motives of study ; its consequent slavery to examination, and worship of numerical success ; its tendency to foster overwork—because it was these defects which threw Almond into that attitude of violent opposition in which he habitually regarded it. His hatred of public school entrance scholarships—‘baby scholarships,’ as he commonly styled them—has already been mentioned in the chapter on Health. But much as he

abhorred these competitions on physical grounds, he hated them on intellectual grounds still more. He had all the scientific educator's distrust of precocity, and talks scornfully in one of the sermons of the 'ideal children of some mischievous visionaries, pale with learning before they have ceased to grow, precocious in conceit, and exhausted in vitality.' 'The whole modern system of the scholarship and other competitive examinations,' he remarks again, 'is tending carefully to select and to emasculate the naturally best intellect of the country.' So keen was his dislike of the competitive principle that he refused to sanction the usual system of school prizes at Loretto. Prizes were assigned not for relative but for absolute merit. Thus there might be three prizes in one Form and none in another. His attitude towards competitive school scholarships was equally uncompromising. In the various schemes which he drew up for the founding of Loretto there was always inserted the condition that no such scholarships should ever be accepted by the School.

But competitive scholarships were not the only feature of the modern system to which Almond was opposed. He was utterly at odds with the whole principle of that system — 'the wretched mis-education,' as he terms it, 'of working for marks.' 'One of my objections to these vile examinations,' he writes to a colleague, 'is that they make the training of boys take a back seat. Scripture and History when taught for examination are an utterly different thing from the same subjects taught to elevate and widen the thoughts.' But the vials of his particular wrath were reserved for the Army Examinations. 'I dared not enter the Army Class,' he complains, during the brief period when he tolerated such a class at Loretto, 'as I would have found myself trying to make the boys think.' He detested the whole system of Army preparation, whether conducted by professed town tutors, or by public school masters turned 'crammers.' But the public school, he admitted, could still do something for the moral and physical education of Army candidates. The educational ideal in the case of such boys, although grievously impaired, was not altogether sunk.

No such extenuating plea could be advanced for the town tutor—the ‘crammer’ pure and simple. Yet he was the inevitable product, the fine and perfect flower of the Army Examination system. What was to be said for the ideas which had called him into existence? ‘*Solvuntur risu tabulae.*’ ‘The system of competitive examination,’ he remarks in the second lecture on ‘The Difficulties of Health Reformers,’ ‘has had free swing in China for centuries. It has given her the mandarin. The selection of warriors by paper-work, tempered by a previous London life partly sedentary and partly loose, is a climax which has been reserved for our riper civilisation.’

But Almond’s heterodoxy in matters intellectual went even deeper than has been already set forth. That intense practicality of temper to which attention has been called in previous chapters led him to disparage the value of all erudition and accomplishment which had little bearing upon the happiness of mankind. Of fine scholarship he had a positive dislike. It was natural, indeed, that a man of ardent humanitarianism and racy, practical vigour should be averse to that finikin attention to the vehicle of thought, too often to the detriment of thought itself; that fastidious taste, ‘spinning the thread so fine,’ as Burns observes, ‘that it is fit neither for warp nor woof’; that pedantic antiquarianism of temper, attaching an unreasonable importance to the interests of a distant past—which the too exclusive study of the masterpieces of dead nations is apt to produce. But he had a further objection to scholarly studies, as tending to foster the respect for authority which he regarded as the parent of so much evil. ‘The source of all our disasters,’ he wrote to the late Warden of Merton during the Boer war, ‘is that boys from their earliest years are never taught to think; and this I believe to be greatly due to the fact that the scholarly mind rather than the scientific mind is the passport to all educational appointments from the village school upwards. For the scholar appeals naturally to usage, the man of science to truth.’

Nor was it only in the sphere of scholarship that he made light of mere erudition apart from practical import and

power. He considered that an exaggerated value was assigned to the studies of the 'seedy Professor' in every field, and dwelt with pleasure upon the rude superiorities of a more muscular generation. 'I do not think there can be any doubt,' he wrote to the *Times*, 'that an army of football-players, hunting-men, and deer-stalkers would beat an army of *literati*, mathematicians, and philosophers out of the field.' The temper, as has been elsewhere observed, was not a fortunate one for the encouragement of school study; nor can it be doubted that, in his disgust at the trend of modern education, he valued too little the results of steady class-teaching. The ordinary work of a school, as of necessity now conducted, seemed to him more likely to deaden than to develop the vivid humanistic interest, unfettered intelligence, and lively practical brains which he loved. 'As to work,' he writes to a colleague, 'boys' loss of interest is everywhere, and no wonder. Our reformers have carefully weeded out, and almost made impossible, everything about which a boy could be keen. . . . Interest is all killed by the style of work examinations have fostered. . . . At present, when work is all cut and dried by the influence of the examination spirit, it is very hard for me to pretend an interest which I cannot feel, and cannot expect any healthy boy to feel.'

We have already seen how successive vicegerents fulfilled the function which Almond found himself unable to supply; but the impulse which he failed to lend to the formal studies of the classes he reserved for those casual meetings and colloquies with his boys which were so characteristic a feature of his management of the School. Loretto has produced a number of pupils, considering the absence of pecuniary attractions above referred to perhaps even a surprising number of pupils, who have done well in Scholarship and Science. Few of these but will acknowledge that the best part of their intellectual training was derived from Almond himself. To be much with him—and many boys were much with him—was in itself a liberal education. It is impossible to imagine a more stimulating influence.

Nor would it be true to represent him as at any time

wholly severed from the routine instruction of the place. Reference has already been made to the vivid and inspiring Bible lessons which he delivered daily to the School, and to those eloquent and moving sermons which were so remarkable a feature of the chapel services. No less interesting were his lectures to the School upon a wide variety of subjects, of which astronomy was a favourite. For many years, also, he took a leading part in the choral music of the School, and it is difficult to overestimate the debt which his boys owe him for the purity of taste and firmness of will which excluded from their repertory all that was trashy, and fed their young imaginations upon the best models. His love of Handel, indeed, sometimes interfered with the propriety of special occasions. It was difficult to see, for instance, why the 'Hailstone Chorus' should be performed at one Commemoration Service, or 'With thee the unsheltered moor I tread' at another. But his enthusiastic liking for the great melodious master had a happy influence upon the perceptions of the School. The man whose boyhood has been nourished upon Handel will never fall into that depravity and poverty of musical taste which, in too many cases, is one of the most discouraging results of our national education.

But to resume: the Head would sometimes take a special class in History and, now and then, in the absence of a master, an ordinary Classical or Mathematical Class. It is of one of these last occasions that Mr. Oliphant Smith writes as follows: 'Once, when we were plodding through some dull speech of Cicero, he suddenly stopped the translator and burst into a flood of eloquence, designed to show, not what Cicero actually said, but the kind of impression he must have made. He finished characteristically with a shout of gleeful laughter at his own success. He had made out a case, and what did the Head love better than making out a case? On a similar occasion we had brought our Homers, or Euclids, or Logics (a text-book on skating would have served equally well), and he spent the whole hour in showing us pictures of the Roman emperors. This may be strange, but perhaps it is stranger that, ten years later, one, at least,

of those who were there can still remember much of what he said about the emperors.'

He had, indeed, a keen interest in Greek and Roman history, and to the end of his life was a strong supporter of the classics. He wrote much in defence of Latin as affording an indispensable discipline for the young mind, and frequently quoted Lord Goschen's well-known paper, which ascribes a mystical influence, of the dumb-bell order, to the exercise of Latin prose. Strange to say, he was even a vigorous champion of Latin verse, as giving boys a definite puzzle to solve, and developing that resourcefulness and power which he set far above information. He was on safer and, as many will consider, more sensible ground, when he wrote those admirable passages upon the value of Greek literature, one of which is quoted in a later chapter.

The vigorous scientific movement which Mr. Marzials has recently introduced at Loretto commanded his careful attention and steady support. The examination system has not yet overtaken the general science work of schools, and Almond observed here that keen interest on the part of the boys which the study of the classics seemed no longer to evoke. During the last year of his life more than half the upper School were upon the science side, and it is to be regretted that a movement so closely connected with the main endeavour of Almond's life was not earlier developed at Loretto. For it is just here, in his championship of classical education, that I find the chief instance of that lack of lucidity which the enthusiastic worker in the field of practice rarely escapes, and which was, in some measure, characteristic of Almond's mind. When he remarks, as in a recently quoted passage, upon the tendency of scholarly study to foster the appeal to authority, and upon the routine influence which it thus exercises upon the minds of headmasters classically trained, we may perhaps agree with him; but it is not easy to see how a system of study which is thus injurious to the master can be beneficial to the pupil, how the results which it produces in the one case will not inevitably follow in the other. It is strange that Almond did not perceive that a scientific system of intellectual education was

the necessary counterpart of his physical and social propaganda. The man of conservative instincts will naturally support the classical method of training as 'fostering the appeal to usage,' and favouring respect for the past. But the champion of an ideal reformation must seek to form the scientific temper, according to which the appeal is always to truth ; and the scientific temper, most difficult to produce under any circumstances, assuredly cannot be produced at all save by the long and careful discipline of scientific study.

Had Almond perceived this, he would have become an ardent pioneer in scientific education, and I should have had positive results of his to set forth in the sphere of school studies. As it is, this chapter is a record of mere protest ; and, like all such histories, cannot but leave an unsatisfactory impression upon the mind. Yet there is something of solid value in the spirit of Almond's dissent. Signs are not lacking that we are approaching the end of the examination period. The forces of discontent are gathering strength. A new generation will emancipate its sons from a thralldom which has become intolerable. The keenness of Almond's sense of the meaning of intellectual life, and the intensity of his hatred of the method of competitive examination which acts upon it like a blight are in the spirit of such a movement. While many of his professional brethren threw in their lot with the dominant system and made their gain of it, he maintained the purity of his protest. He is to be regarded, in his own degree, as a herald of the better age ; as one of those who, in days of much darkness, cherished the ideal, though they could not move towards it.

CHAPTER XIX

RELIGION

ALMOND's gaiety and vivacity of temper blinded at times even intimate friends to his deep earnestness. A certain superficial levity, leading him to talk lightly of things which he deemed part of the business and usage of religion rather than of its essence, lent colour to the mistake. But if religion may be described as the conviction of the unseen, there were few more religious men, few whose lives were as completely penetrated with the influence of imaginative conceptions. Stress has been laid elsewhere upon the intense practicality of his attitude. More and more, as life went on, he limited his gaze to the world we know. None the less is it true that his own chief power lay in dreams. Behind all the practical details in which his life was immersed there lay always an ideal vision which was to him the true reality, the informing spirit of all his thought.

'I never knew any one in the flesh,' he writes to a colleague in 1900, 'who taught me so much about education ; but where I think your weak point is that you are so bent on helping boys to get on in the world as it is, that you do not sufficiently see that an object in all education, soaring above though not divorced from the practical, is so to educate them as to train men who shall help to frame an ideal of the world as it might be, and to move towards it.'

'To frame an ideal of the world as it might be, and to move towards it'—this was the essence of religion for Almond. It was because he found this conception enshrined in the 'Kingdom of Heaven' of the Gospels that his allegiance to Christ was so devout. To much of the personal religion of the evangelicals, with its maxims of prudence

and soul-saving, he had a deep repugnance. 'The great misconception of Christianity,' he writes, 'has been [in the failure to recognise] that the Gospel message is only so far personal that it teaches individuals the duty of working for collective good.' It was in a glorified public spirit, labouring for the righteousness and happiness of the world, that he found Christianity to consist.

The individual touch which redeemed such a system from the charge of commonplace was to be found in the earnestness with which he insisted on the need of a true scientific temper in the Church, if the cause of humanity was to be in any way advanced. To Almond, as has been explained, custom was the chief source of the preventible evils of life. In every department of thought and practice it was, in his view, the slavery to routine that baffled the hope of improvement. The fearless originality of Christ, protesting more against the conventional usages of religious persons than against the heinous sins of the ungodly, seemed to him to point the true spirit of the religious worker. Upon the servile spirit of conformity the attack must first be directed. For the idolatry of usage must be substituted an intelligent reverence for law. And it was here that the art of doing good, the 'Queen of Arts,' as he finely calls it, had need of Science as her tutor. The function of Science was to ascertain the divinely appointed laws. Religion was nothing else than the love of them in the heart and the practice of them in the life. Thus Science and Religion, so often opposed in the thought of pious people, with him went hand in hand. Rationality, or the scientific temper, was as needful to the Christian worker as moral devotion, the life of the intellect as indispensable as the life of the spirit.

The intense practicality of mind, so often referred to, led him to confine his gaze to the sphere of ordinary habit. Here there was needed a new enthusiasm of obedience to physical law—to physical law as revealed by science, if human life was to be redeemed. In comparison with the grand promise of such obedience the keen interest aroused by disputed problems of theology, by subtle points of scholarship, or delicate questions of art seemed to him a

‘fiddling while Rome was burning.’ He was far, indeed, from deprecating intellectual or theological discussions, but he considered that the relative importance of such discussions was altogether exaggerated. A man might occupy himself with them, if he liked, but the serious call of life lay in the gospel of obedience to ascertained law of which we have been speaking. He would have considered it an infinitely more important work, and therefore more binding upon religion, to convince a parish of the healthfulness of open windows than to give it more orthodox views of the Atonement; to possess a board school with a spirit of honesty and sobriety than to imbue it with a sense of scholarship. The following passage, taken from a letter of 1900, illustrates one aspect of this position:—

‘It is the central belief of my life that the “Kingdom of Heaven” will some day be realised on earth. How far we who have tried to bring it about shall share in it is one of the things of which we must be content to be ignorant: we can only do our best in faith. But I am certain that the essential mark of that kingdom will not be pietism but rationality. There will be no black-coated clergy talking unrealities and platitudes to perspiring congregations in stuffy churches. And there will be no disputes about abstract questions which men will never settle. But I am certain that one element of the religion of the future will be reverential obedience to those laws of God which we know for certain and which we can verify. I cannot verify whether there is a presence in consecrated bread or not. I don’t deny it and I can’t affirm it. But I am absolutely certain that neither church, workshop, railway-carriage nor house should be artificially heated much above fifty-four, and that the air in such places ought to be so pure that a germ can find no *pabulum* in it. I am also certain that the breathing organs should have no bandages, or pressure of any kind—no, not even when a soldier is on parade. I am also certain that people of all ages, but specially children, should be out of doors a great deal in the best part of the day, and, if possible, in sunlight . . . Every one who be-

lieves the truth must just hammer away at it : that is the way in which all great reforms have been worked. Socrates was said to bring philosophy from heaven to earth—yes, and those who think with us must bring science from the steam-engine to man.'

In his religious teaching at Loretto there was no passage to which he made more frequent reference than to the page of Herbert Spencer's *Essays on Education* in which the philosopher insists that if drunkenness is a sin, so are all breaches of the laws of health. He had a keen sympathy with every wholesome form of recreation, but the modern system of balls, with its costly feasts at midnight and night-long dances in a vitiated air, seemed to him a plain immorality. What advantage could compensate for the exhaustion and debility too often consequent on such performances? With the modern dinner-party also, more particularly as given in the 'seventies' in Edinburgh, he was quite at odds. I happened once to be present with him at a large entertainment of the kind, in a house which was renowned for the sumptuousness of its hospitality. The host had a high respect for Almond, and put him in the place of honour at his right. But as one elaborate dish succeeded another and the choice wines circulated in endless profusion, Almond grew more and more depressed. It was in vain that the master of the feast exerted all his well-known powers of fascination : it was impossible to rouse in Almond a single gleam of satisfaction. The festivity violated all his ideas of wholesome living, and he sat absent and moody, as ill at ease amid the general hilarity as one might fancy an early Christian at a banquet of Petronius.

Almond's new reading of Christianity as the application of the scientific temper to the habits of daily life created a fresh conception of 'the world.' Many religious people are frankly fashionable. Their lives are an elegant compromise between the precepts of Christ and the practice of the vogue. To one who considered custom as the chief source of the preventible evils of life such an attitude was deeply repugnant. Fashion has no stronger enemy than the spirit of

science. But it was not only in persons whose position was thus equivocal, nor in the 'rich, self-centred class with its lazy pride, its low ideal, its elaborate surroundings and wasteful feasts,' that he recognised the enemies of the 'Kingdom.' Foes as deadly were to be found in the slow-minded supporters of exploded usage, the steady plodders in routine paths, men content with the established order. In such respectable people, however closely associated with the mechanical working of the Church, he detected the true intellectual deadness of the 'children of the world.' The following passage from a letter to his wife shows us his conception alike of the Christian and the worldly spirit under the conditions of modern life :—

'I don't suppose Harry knows why I specially picked —— for the "Lorettonian."* It is because, when he was forced to go into business, he wrote me a most fervid letter, saying that it would now be the object of his life to reform business habits, to see that his clerks (when he had them) had air and exercise, to have fives-court, gymnasium, etc., at his office, and give them an hour's daylight for such things. When the ordinary man who calls himself a Christian would have simply written about his prospects, and, when he grew up, subscribed liberally to charities, gone to church and said the responses, and perhaps taken the chair, and made a speech with some unction and some wit at a C.U.M. Society [meeting], etc., etc., the citizen of "the Kingdom" is working and scheming to save these young men from the bad physical habits which lead to vice and sickness.'

In the vehemence of his protest against conventionality he welcomed the reputation of Loretto for eccentricity as an indication of life. 'I am interested to hear that you have seen our ways at Musselburgh,' he writes. 'People, of course, say we are mad. It is a sign we are doing some good, and I am always thankful to hear it.' 'The world must think you as mad as the Gospel,' he remarks elsewhere, 'if you are to do any good on the lines of the Gospel.' Yet,

* *I.e.* as the typical Lorettonian.—R. J. M.

as the years passed, he recognised the growth in the public mind of the spirit of rationality. 'It is the greatest pleasure of my life,' he observes in 1900, 'to find that an appeal to common-sense on any matter is not generally regarded as so convincing a proof that a man is a lunatic as it was some years ago.'

It was to be expected that a mind so devoted to the cult of rationality should have inclined to a negative attitude in matters of speculative belief. Yet for nearly thirty years of Almond's educational activity the orthodox convictions which he had formed at the time of his father's death held their ground. During all my own schooldays (which came to an end in 1876) and for more than a decade of years afterwards, the Resurrection and Divinity of Christ remained for him unshaken verities, twin lamps of truth, fixed up on high above the darkness of the world, shedding their radiance far into the void. In his, as in most gifted natures, there clashed contending principles. Side by side with the rationalistic temper there existed in him a vein of mysticism which finds not infrequent expression in the sermons. The belief in the personality of the evil principle, so generally abandoned in our day, he seems still to have entertained. 'A clergyman,' he writes in a sermon of 1886, 'was once preaching from the text, "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God." He began, "Yes, and a greater fool said, there is no devil." For just separate the idea of evil spirits from all superstitious and grotesque associations, and try to give any other rational explanation of the dislike to goodness because it is good.'

In a sermon of the same original date, entitled 'The Meanings of Holy Communion,'* the same tendency is nobly illustrated:—

'We commemorate a death; we adore a person who is our present Saviour. How? you may ask, and where? We cannot define; we dare not localise. Let others dispute, while we believe and do. There are some, indeed, bewildered by the endless and unprofitable controversies about the *manner* of our Saviour's presence in this sacrament,

* *Christ the Protestant, and other Sermons* (Blackwood).

who deny the reality, or even the possibility of the *fact*. So might they tear to shreds the mystery of the Incarnation, for *how* can the godhead have been veiled under the form of flesh and blood like ours?

‘And so also have men, believing in nothing which their senses cannot perceive or their reason fathom, tried to resolve the great Spirit of the Universe into the magnified image of the spirit of man, reflected, like the cloud-spectres seen from some mountain-tops, upon the mists of his own imagination; and the spirit of man, in turn, into the blind whirl of self-formed atoms. But is it not rather the case that we are everywhere, and at every moment, in contact with the invisible world?—that we cannot account for any thought or any act of will, or for the beginning of any conscious life, or for the sprouting of any seed, or for the attraction of any particle, but by existences and powers which we cannot see, or handle, or comprehend?

‘There is, indeed, a veil between us and the invisible world which shall be rent at death. Are we so sure that it is always impenetrable in life?—that the ministry of angels is a childish dream, and that seducing spirits are only another name for the impulses of our own animal nature? Are we so sure that the dead are never near us?—that “the touch of a vanished hand, and the sound of a voice that is still” figure no mysterious reality?—that no pulsations ever throb from soul to soul, over broad lands and seas, in life, or at the hour of death?

‘Oh, surely, if we believe that there is anything but blank nothingness “behind the veil,” then we may also believe that our Saviour, according to His word, *is* present in this sacrament—present, not by virtue of any power of pope, or bishop, or priest, or minister, but by His own still existing power, exercised as He has promised wherever His followers eat and drink in His name the bread and wine which He has ordered to be used; present amid the incense and the lights and the vestments and the prostrate forms of the Roman ritual; present, when the minister, with uplifted hands, blesses the bread and wine on the bare hillside; present, alike for those with whom reverence has darkened

into superstition, and for those who, whilst they obey His bidding, know not that the Lord of the feast is personally there. And if asked, *How* present? our only answer is, "Behind the veil! Behind the veil."

It was certainly not for want of power to perceive the charms of a mystical religion that he devoted himself so entirely to the remedy of the practical ills of life. That imperious desire of the human spirit to peer beyond the curtain that shrouds its destiny he shared to the full. Seldom has the longing received more striking expression than in the following passage taken from a sermon published in 1892 * :—

'In a few years, more or less, we shall have nothing more to do with the things which are now most real to us. It may be that we shall look back on them, and remember them more vividly than we now remember our past lives; but the eyes which now see shall be blind, and the ears which now hear shall be deaf, the nerves which now feel shall thrill us neither with pleasure nor with pain.

'Of what infinite importance, then, is all which concerns this future life of ours, which will so soon swallow up our whole earthly life, as the ocean swallows up a little drop of rain.

'Oh, that we could make that silent shadow speak, who sits and waits for all of us somewhere—we know not where—on the circle of some revolving year, and tell us of what lies beyond the dark borderland where he dwells! Then, surely, our whole thoughts and interests would lie in that other world beyond the grave; and all the scenes and occupations in which we are forced to mingle here would pass in blurred outline before our careless eyes, as the gazing crowds pass before the doomed prisoner, when the scaffold interrupts the long vista of the street.'

But in such mystical imaginings he deemed it wrong to dwell, and gradually the influence of scientific study and the growth in his mind of the conception of the uniformity of nature impaired his belief in the miraculous. The process

* *Sermons by a Lay Headmaster.* Second Series (Swan, Sonnenschein and Co.).

of relinquishment was hastened by the publication in the *Nineteenth Century Magazine* for 1886 and following years, of Professor Huxley's famous articles upon Christian evidences. It was impossible that a man of Almond's marked controversial faculty should fail to be affected by the terrible force with which, upon that occasion, the great gladiator beat down unequal foes. It is from this time that we must date Almond's abandonment of the Christian dogma of the Divinity of Christ.

To the doctrine of the Resurrection, on the other hand, he still clung with much tenacity. Almost until the end of his life he considered that an explanation of the phenomena recounted in the Gospels was to be found in those theories of survival which have been brought into prominence by the investigations of the Psychical Society. In the last document of all, written a few days before his death, this solution is abandoned. Yet even in this last letter the immense strength of the witness to the fact of the Resurrection gives him pause. He still admits some suspension of judgment.

Of the doctrine of Immortality, apart from the pledge and earnest of the Resurrection, he had no sure hold. In the interesting statement, written in the year 1900 for his son 'Geo,' he talks of 'the hope of a happy survival founded upon the survival of Jesus Christ.' In a letter of the same year, above quoted, the note is changed. After stating that it was the central belief of his life that the 'Kingdom of Heaven' would one day be realised upon earth, he thus proceeds: 'How far we who have tried to bring it about shall share in it is one of the things we must be content to be ignorant of: we can only do our best in faith.' This last utterance would seem to represent his final position with regard to the question.

He was the more ready to acquiesce in so doubtful a conclusion that his interest in the problem was more and more dwarfed by larger claims. So intense became his absorption in a great idea, so firm his conviction of its triumph in the sure process of the world, that at length all personal cravings seemed to him insignificant in comparison.

‘For myself,’ he writes in the letter referred to in the last paragraph but one—a letter written when he felt himself almost in the presence of death—‘it does not cost me a sigh to think that I may be in 1930 what I was in 1830.’ ‘Our duties,’ he continues, ‘are here, and to the end of my days I shall do my utmost to do my particular work, viz., to help deliver men from the immense mass of pains and evils brought about by doing what has been done, instead of trying, with entirely open mind, to discover what is best to be done.’

He was one of those rare spirits who care more for public than for private ends. The absurdity of army uniforms, the neglect of the plainest considerations of common-sense in the schooling of the masses, the terrible injury inflicted upon sound education by the Army Examinations were to him personal griefs, depriving him, at times, of sleep, and ‘marring all the ease and pleasantness of life.’ But it was impossible for that buoyant temper to dwell long in mere discouragement. More than most practical workers he recognised how slowly new ideas penetrate the minds of men. ‘Mahomet,’ he says in his humorous way, ‘was fifteen years without making a convert, and then Mrs. Mahomet joined his Church.’ He had that enduring patience which is the strength of wise reform, and understood, as perhaps only a schoolmaster can, how much wearisome and petty toil is necessary, if we would realise any part of the divine vision which came so easily. ‘I can’t understand your pessimist views,’ he writes to Mr. Russell in 1897. ‘There is hardly a year of my life (since Oxford, which I hated) I would not gladly live over again. . . . One must only believe that there is a deep undercurrent which we cannot reach with our plumb-lines, but bubbling up somewhere and somehow, if we only go straight ahead, and do our best to make the world a happier place.’

Sometimes, as in the following passage from the sermon entitled ‘The Turning of the Sun,’ * this invincible faith finds poetical expression:—

‘So, on some dull, bitter day of spring, I have seen great flocks of sheep driven to their summer pastures. The

* *Sermons by a Lay Headmaster.* Second Series (Swan, Sonnenschein and Co.).

grass is scarcely growing then, but they are driven there in faith, because the shepherds know that the sun is rapidly gaining power behind the clouds, and that the genial showers and warm sunshine must soon make the brown pastures green. And so I think that all true Christians, even when the days seemed very dark, knew that all the time their Sun was coming nearer. Surely their faith has been justified. If you can imagine yourself placed at a distance from our earth in spring-time, so that you could be a witness of the change passing over our northern hemisphere, you might see here and there storm-clouds gathering, and the far-extended gleam of fresh-fallen snow. But yet, from day to day, there would be on the whole perceptible progress. The ice-cap would be steadily growing smaller; there would, take it all in all, be less snow, more sunlight, and brighter colouring. Just so, if the great cloud of witnesses, whom the Bible speaks of as compassing us round about, can really see from their resting-place what is passing on this earth, must not the sunshine appear to be gaining on the darkness, the spring upon the winter, century by century and year by year?’

The love of righteousness and rationality, and the glorified public spirit which seeks to extend their reign upon earth—this, as has been said, was the essential part of religion for Almond. His reverence for Christ as the great exemplar of this love and of that spirit survived all changes of belief. Religion, thus conceived, he endeavoured to make the centre of life at Loretto, and it remains that we should say some further word of those noble sermons from which we have already quoted so frequently, and which supplied the highest moment of those bright services which were the best expression of Loretto life. Mr. Lamert, in his paper in the *Memories*, gives us a vivid impression of the effect of Almond’s preaching:—

‘A strange tenseness in the air, a feeling of electrical power quivering through the building, a nameless force drawing irresistibly all eyes and ears. The light and play of a hundred emotions flickering across that strong face; the eyes now dreamily gazing into a far distance with deep

calm, now flashing darkly to express an instant thought. A wonderful voice, anon ringing high with moral earnestness, anon sinking to a soft cadence of persuasion, anon thundering in a very fury of denunciation.'

It may be doubted if sermons of such rich and varied power as those of Almond have ever been delivered elsewhere to a congregation of boys. A deep knowledge of boy-nature; a tender sympathy for boyish faults and troubles; clear moral judgments that draw from an inner source of purity; wise social lessons that spring from a natural fount of loving-kindness; a keen intellectual faculty seeking ever for the law to live by; a high courage upholding the militant quality of true virtue—these are their leading characteristics. And the style is worthy of such high matter. It is eloquent, simple, mobile, abounding with happy illustrations.

Yet perhaps I am wrong to say that the sermon was the highest moment of the services at Loretto. Almond himself would not have so considered it. From the time of his conversion, if one may so call it, at Merchiston he had been a regular communicant. At the end of his life, when the two great pillars of his earlier faith seemed tottering, he still clung to the rite as an act of obedience to the Great Master, who had doubtless 'reasons for giving this command which we cannot fathom.' 'I can thoroughly claim to be a Christian,' he writes to his wife in 1898, 'that is, I believe that Jesus Christ would have acknowledged me as a disciple, and as one trying to bring about the 'Kingdom of Heaven' upon earth. . . . I can conscientiously comply with a definite request certainly made by the Divine Preacher of the "Kingdom of Heaven."' The majority of the upper boys at Loretto, whether Presbyterian or Episcopalian, were communicants, and he always considered that such boys occupied a special position, as being pledged to fight for the cause of good. It was to them that he delivered his most intimate addresses. He was less tongue-tied, he said, in the presence of boys who were all intending to be Christians than on other occasions when some of the partisans of evil might be present. He was deeply con-

vinced of the value of Confirmation. To their first communion, and the careful lessons with which he prepared them for it, many Loretto boys trace a new beginning.

To this picture of Almond's religious life I have little to add. To enlarge it on the moral side would be to recapitulate much that has been said elsewhere. In the sphere of dogmatic beliefs his history reflects the transition of our age. What thoughtful man of to-day stands in such matters where he stood ten years ago? What thoughtful man of to-day is satisfied with his theological position? Yet in spite of doubt and bewilderment, shallow assertion and as shallow denial, there is still a unity which combines all good men. It may yet find outer embodiment. Some day, perhaps, when the present welter of warring systems shall be stilled, there may arise a Church which will 'inscribe upon its banners no legend but the twin blazon of Love to God and Love to man.'* Of such a Church, if a deep reverence for the Divine laws and an ardent enthusiasm of humanity should constitute credentials, Almond would be an orthodox member. Of such a Church, existing, it may be, even now across all the divisions of High Church, or Low Church, or No Church, he was at all times a true son.

* The words, I believe, are Chevalier Bunsen's.

CHAPTER XX

SECOND LETTER CHAPTER

In the present chapter, according to the plan already adopted, it is proposed to insert letters illustrative of the last four chapters.

I.

LETTERS DEALING WITH QUESTIONS OF HEALTH.

First of those having reference to questions of Health I give the letter to Herbert Spencer referred to in the opening paragraph of the chapter devoted to that subject.

TO HERBERT SPENCER, 5 Percival Terrace, Brighton.

‘NORTH ESK LODGE,
‘MUSSELBURGH, October 27, 1900.

‘I hope you will not consider this an undue liberty, but I owe so much to you that I feel myself bound to make an acknowledgment, whether you wish to receive such an acknowledgment or not.

‘Some twenty-five years ago I, for the first time, read your *Essays on Education*. The sentence in which you say that while so many try to rear the finest bullocks or horses, no one ever tries to rear the finest men, took hold on me as no other sentence which I have ever read has done. My eyes were opened by it to what seemed to me a mass of prejudice and folly on which our descendants will look back as we look on the customs of savages; and I made a solemn vow that there should be at least one exception to your well-deserved taunt.

‘I had then but a very small School to work on as a

fulcrum. Whether I have succeeded or not in showing what can be done in this direction in spite of bad upbringing, and mismanagement during holidays, and prejudices of all sorts is rather for others to say than for myself. But you may possibly have seen one outcome of the main object of my life in the *Nineteenth Century* for this month, and the thoughts which lie at the bottom of that article* are due to you.

‘I wonder if you are aware what you have done for Girls’ Schools. Your strictures when you wrote were only too true. There is now something like a revolution in the better class of school. My daughter at St. Andrews Girls’ School is no longer a victim of formal walks and prim, idiotic habits, but she plays hard games, with a very much clearer brain than was produced by the old régime of foul air, crushed animal spirits, and slow and chilly movements.

‘Were I not reluctant to trouble you at greater length, I could speak of many other valuable lessons which I received from these Essays, and, however men may differ from your philosophy, you have been certainly a benefactor to the world of a very high order by the Essays to which I refer.’

The following letter illustrates the scientific spirit in which he regarded all questions of health.

TO H. F. MORLAND-SIMPSON, Headmaster of the
Grammar School, Aberdeen.

‘DRUMRUINIE LODGE,
‘ULLAPOOL, June 27, 1902.

‘. . . Did you look at the new boys’ measurements at the end of the book? Whether or not you can add to stature by taking thought, they prove abundantly that you can add greatly to chest measurement by taking pains. But our advantage has decreased since I got more boys from preparatory schools where human welfare is to some extent studied and not so many mistakes made as are done by (generally) ignorant parents.

* The article is entitled ‘The Breed of Man.’—R. J. M.

‘Is it not disgraceful that, when no one will keep cows and pigs without trying to learn about them, people are allowed to have children, our future citizens and soldiers, who know nothing about the laws of their being? I hardly ever find a parent who has studied the text-book, Clement Dukes’ *Health at School*, or who knows the periods of incubation of various germ diseases.

‘An English house-master, an old colleague of mine, took the average chest girths of a lot of schools, and our curve was far the best, but not in my opinion as good as it should be. For we are in the infancy of the most important of all the sciences. I feel like one exploring the outskirts of an almost untrodden country, to a great extent also a forbidden country, by that fiend, Mrs. Grundy.

‘To what is our better curve due? Not to anything but to the attempt to observe the laws of health so far as we can, in spite of the obstruction caused by holidays and other causes.

‘What hours of sleep ought a boy to have in summer and in winter? At various ages? At most public schools this is a matter of rule of thumb. I do not know the truth yet, but I am sure, first, that a boy under thirteen should have ten hours in bed in winter and about nine in summer, and no growing boy less than nine in winter, perhaps eight in summer.

‘What about food? Tea? Beer? If some boys won’t eat vegetables, how supply the necessary element? Lime-juice? Vegetable soup? Fruit?

‘Grubbing. Isn’t it worthy of one of Dante’s Circles that they actually boast of buying a cricket-field by the profits of the grub-shop at some schools? How can the chest extend properly without good blood? How can this be made, if the stomach gets no rest? And if it is always craving for something, is it not a source of future tippling, which sends all schemes of improvement down to the bottomless pit?

‘Then clothing. Is it not pitiable to see men in this weather cycling in coats and not in a single flannel shirt, and so weakening themselves, and all for fear of that she-devil?

‘I think I told you that when we stopped waistcoats our boys’ chest girth went up. I would not allow a boy to wear a coat of any sort, in school or at meals, in this weather.

‘For, first, why make lessons uncomfortable? Second, the chest should encounter no resistance. So this coatless practice helps chest girth. Of course, all military tunics are an abomination. Look at sailors—a far prettier dress, too.

‘Have the fools never found out why soldiers die so much with consumption? But the whole subject is one. Once begin to study human development by the light of modern knowledge, and a new science will be recognised, which will soon have results to show far better than those of our register. To advance this science against the world, the flesh, and the devil (and his wife, Mrs. Grundy) is my life-work.’

Letters dealing with the influence of football, fertility, the preservation of rights of ways upon the physique of the race.

TO THE REV. H. A. JAMES, D.D., Headmaster of
Rugby School.

‘NORTH ESK LODGE,
MUSSELBURGH, May 30, 1899.

‘. . . We shall not agree on some points, but on one I wish you to understand me: the football matter of which I wrote you is not a question of a game, it is much deeper.

‘I am a sincere believer of Herbert Spencer’s axiom that “the first condition of national prosperity is to be a nation of good animals,” and it is the main object of my life to do away with the reproach that, “while people try to rear the finest horses and dogs, no one takes the same pains with human beings.” (Not quite accurate quotations—from memory.)

‘Now, the Continental nations bring up their boys in gross violation of all the laws of physiology. But, to a large extent, they make up for this by their compulsory

military service. Universal peace, and the disbanding of armies, would mean the rapid deterioration of the European.

‘We have as yet avoided conscription, but the only way in which we can, under modern circumstances of aggregation in the towns and artificial life, rear a healthy nation without it, is by having athletics of various kinds on a scientific basis, arranged not for the pleasure of spectators but for the good of the participators.

‘The modern game of football against which I have warred is tending to become gladiatorial. The old Rugby game was better for the players, and, I believe, more interesting for them.

‘This is not only my own idea ; you will find it shared by a very thoughtful writer in the *Sportsman’s Year-Book* for this year. He says (p. 224) : “We rejoice that compulsory military service does not exist among us ; it is doubtful whether it will long remain a subject for congratulation if professionalism means athletics for the few, for the amusement of the many.” It was therefore that I ventured to appeal to you to take a strong line to resist this dangerous tendency from your commanding position.

‘I think you will find I have Dukes on my side. I only know Dukes by his writings, but from these he seems to me to have one of the soundest brains of all living men whose names are known to the public. If all schools could turn out their boys according to his ideal, it would be well for this country.

‘I don’t think it is so much that boys have too much brain work, as that, in many cases, they get too little oxygen. With us the almost total abolition of lines, the substitution of the cane in almost all cases of breach of rules, and the enforcement of abundant exercise on every boy, and, unless medically exempted, on every day and in all kinds of weather, are turning out, I am sure, many strong men into the world who would otherwise have been weaklings.

‘Excuse all this ; but I did not wish you to remain under the idea that I had some narrow aim about the rules of football.’

TO CARL SÖRENSEN (O.L.), Copenhagen.

‘NORTH Esk LODGE,
‘MUSSELBURGH, *May* 30, 1899.

‘. . . I certainly am a subscriber to the Malthusian creed. I think the total sum of happiness in the world would be much greater with a quarter of the people, and I regard pestilence as a heaven-sent blessing. A crowded world with no solitude, and railways everywhere, would soon destroy all the finer and subtler instincts of humanity.

‘Of course I am doing what I can to convert weak into strong, but remember that weaklings I get are merely artificially and temporarily weak, by bad managing as children. What I object to is the artificial preservation of the weak without making them strong. Malthus, Lycurgus, and Herbert Spencer are three of my great prophets. . . .

‘Of course give the best food to all that you can. Food is one element of strength.

‘My mind is rather running in this direction. We are being pestered about germs. I say, don’t disorganise life to avoid infection, but make people germ-proof. . . .’

TO THE SECRETARY OF THE SCOTTISH RIGHTS OF WAY
SOCIETY.

‘LORETTO, *July* 15, 1887.

‘. . . This keeping up of public rights of way is a most important, and (in my opinion) most truly conservative business.

‘I am ashamed of fellow-conservatives who seem to regard landed property as a purely commercial investment. Nothing can possibly be more contrary to the genuine spirit of Toryism, which, in theory at least, safeguarded the rights of all.

‘But all rights are merely relative, and held from the nation. Even if proprietors had a right to close the country, the maintenance of the national vigour and vitality is an object which supersedes all individual rights.

‘Why, if we supersede these for the object of enabling

people to get quickly from place to place by railways, shall they not be superseded for the infinitely more important object of making these people themselves finer men? For that is really the deep-seated principle which makes rights of way worth contending for. Right of way to save a quarter of a mile among a heap of abandoned coal-works would not be worth fighting. To get right off the roads for brain-workers and office-workers is worth fighting.'

*A letter attacking what he considered the abuse of
football tours.*

TO A. M. PATERSON (O.L.) (at Oxford).

'NORTH ESK LODGE,
'MUSSELBURGH, February 4, 1890.

'I have been talking to several people about the University football tours, and every one agrees that they are a bad thing. They knock the men up, discredit the 'Varsity, which, of course, cannot play up to form, depreciate the value of a blue, put temptations in men's way to drink and eat too much at those vile dinners, waste time in vacations, which in my experience were the only times one could read (I never lost a day of my Christmas vacation), and help to raise a hue and cry against football from the relatives of the men who get hurt, fagged out, or spend too much money. If they go on, I believe I shall take the step of changing our game to Association for a time to stop our men playing Rugby at the University, so utterly bad do I believe them to be. I am perfectly willing to be put right, but when we have three men in the team, could not they, if they agree with me, simply say they won't go?

'I have been thinking of writing a very strong letter to the *Times* or *Field* in my own name. As you know, no one loves football more than I do, but five days' play in a week, with dinners interspersed, is a climax. It would be infinitely better for men to take to rowing, or even to the most smugish "constitutional." Please give me any ideas. This letter may be shown to any one you please.'

Keble College and simple living.

TO THE REV. CANON TRISTRAM, D.D., The College,
Durham.

‘LORETTO, November 8, 1879.

‘Keble seems to me to take the right side in a more important controversy than any theological one, viz. the side of simple and Christian living against fine linen and sumptuous living. There is no gorging fish, flesh, fowl, and cups at breakfast, no waste of money in getting up rooms, and no elaborate desserts. In fact, it seems to me to be making an attempt to make it possible for a man to keep his baptismal vows, and yet not come out of society. What do you think, by the way, of the laity of our Scotch Episcopal Church giving the clergy a dinner which cost 25s. per head? And this after two “celebrations”? . . .’

TO AN OLD LORETTONIAN.

‘DRUMRUINIE,
‘ULLAPOOL, July 6, 1898.

‘. . . Next to being where I am, I’d like to have been Warden of Keble. What a fight against all the demons of convention and prejudice one would have had! And fighting for an ideal is the great happiness of life.’

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Nudity and prudery.

TO THE SECRETARY OF THE EDINBURGH
DRUMSHEUGH BATHS.*

‘LORETTO, May 25, 1891.

‘. . . Interested as I am in the Drumsheugh Baths and in swimming, I fear I must continue to protest against the neck-to-knee costume.

‘I am aware that ~~n~~ nudity is impossible. We are not

* Almond was a large subscriber to these baths, which have been a great boon to many of the youth of Edinburgh.—R. J. M.

pure enough for that. But bathing-drawers answer every requisite. More costume is a hindrance to swimming, and a concession to modern prudery, which is the antipodes of purity, ancient or modern.

‘The chest, I must submit, is not a part of the person the exposure of which is indecent. It is certainly not so regarded by the ladies, to whose prejudices or feelings you say that the committee deferred.

‘Why boys swimming should be obliged for the sake of decency to be clothed up to the neck, and females dancing should be allowed to be bare much lower down, is a problem which I cannot solve.

‘Hoping that next year the committee may see their way to allow bathing-drawers—I am, etc.’

Why the School had won distinction at football.

TO E. BRITTEN-HOLMES, 23 Abingdon Court, Kensington.

‘NORTH ESK LODGE,
‘MUSSELBURGH, May 29, 1900.

‘. . . The reason why it is so commonly thought in England that we are a large school is because, since we first sent boys regularly to English universities in 1879, we have gained more Rugby Blues than any other school. But this is not due to any particular skill in football, or in any games. It is because by our habit of making boys take hard exercise in absolutely all weathers; by our having no lines or detentions, no punishment, in fact, but the wholesome cane; by grubbing being treated as seriously as smoking; by giving the boys’ breathing organs free play by practically abolishing waistcoats and those wretched starched bands which make boys more inclined to lounge than run about when out of school; and by making them sleep with open windows, we necessarily rear a stronger lot of boys, which comes out in subsequent football.’

The following have reference to the treatment of consumption. It should be noted that the date of the first letter, in which the Head advocates opinions which he had long held, is

1880. *With regard to this letter he complained bitterly that, while its main contention excited no interest, the mention of sea-birds in the first paragraph produced a lively correspondence.*

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Scotsman*.

‘LORETTO, October 14, 1880.

Highlanders and Consumption.

‘The correlation of consumption with the improvement in house-building in the Highlands and Hebrides is a subject which should not be dropped. If ecclesiastical questions are mooted, of little or no practical importance to the welfare of the Highlanders, your columns are full of eager and fruitless discussion for days. But when it comes to be a matter of the wholesale destruction of human food by the preservation of vermin in the shape of sea-birds, or of the undoubted fact that a fearful scourge from which the Highlands and Islands for long enjoyed nearly complete immunity has lately shown a marked tendency to spread in many districts, there is little public interest and no excitement manifested. Nor is this a question affecting only the Highlands. There is surely a great deal of evidence pointing to the conclusion that consumption is a disease of the blood mainly caused by breathing a vitiated atmosphere. I cannot understand Dr. Masson’s argument that the air breathed inside their houses can have scarcely any appreciable effect on people living “so much in the open air as our Highlanders and Islanders.” If only ten hours of the twenty-four are passed in a vitiated atmosphere, it is enough to produce a very appreciable effect indeed.

‘It was found many years ago that consumption was carrying off a larger percentage of the Foot Guards in London than that which prevails among bakers and tailors. Improved ventilation greatly diminished the mortality from this cause, though so long as the clothing of soldiers is of a nature to prevent the perfectly free play of the lungs, there will doubtless remain a considerable mortality from what is probably one of the most preventible of diseases.

This may seem to be a strong assertion, but every year's additional observation of a considerable number of growing boys and young men tallies with evidence from many sources which points to its being a true one.

'I am by no means asserting that pure air in houses is the only factor in the case. Sufficient or insufficient exercise for the upper part of the person makes a difference of two or three inches in the chest girth ; the looseness or tightness of clothes has a great effect on the free play of the lungs ; and the combination of plenty of fatty matter in the diet with the external application of oil (evidenced by the experience of mill-workers) has an undoubted tendency to counteract even hereditary predisposition to the disease. But if one element in the case can be regarded as having a preponderating importance, all the available evidence seems to prove that it is the purity of air in houses, and especially in the sleeping-apartments. The question about the Highland cottages has scarcely anything to do with peat-reek, or with the larger size (which I question) of the old bothies. It is simply this : in the old bothies the carbonic acid exhaled by the lungs of the occupants by day and night escapes through the abundant small crevices of the unmortared walls, and fresh air comes in by the same apertures. I think that a little investigation would show that consumption rarely attacks the inhabitants of these bothies, and that it frequently attacks the inhabitants of those comparatively airtight slated houses, which are beginning to disfigure even the county of Sutherland. . . .—I am, etc.,

'HELY H. ALMOND.'

Four letters referring to the neglect of physical considerations in Board Schools, at naval Crammers, at Glasgow University, and elsewhere.

TO LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH (O.L.), K.T., P.C.

'NORTH ESK LODGE,

'MUSSELBURGH, November 15, 1883.

'I think there cannot be a doubt that the desire of schoolmasters to get children through the various standards, and

the system of pupil teachers, is working immense mischief among a population already deteriorating under the influence of increased city life. Not only is education with too much confinement and too little energy doing harm, but a wider sort of education, such as I endeavoured to sketch, and not the mere book-learning education which is usurping the name, is imperatively called for.

‘The Act seems to give you power * to divert a certain amount of money from being an intellectual stimulus, as you make some grants for books and clothes. Is it impossible to extend this, more especially in the direction of one good daily meal for poor children,† which would be an entirely beneficent thing? And do not gymnasia and workshops come under the head of education?’

‘Even in the class of boys with whom I have to deal, I have been convinced that well-nourished blood, a good circulation, and an expanded chest are necessities of education in its true sense far more than any amount of information put into the brain; and that working the brain without furnishing it with an abundant supply of healthy blood is an unmixed evil.

‘I have no doubt you may be hampered by the Act of 1882. It is wonderful how our legislators get into grooves. They get hold of some easily comprehended and indiscriminating cry, and then cease appealing to first principles in the matter, and so found complex administrative details upon unsound and unexamined principles. . . .’

TO A. MONTGOMERIE BELL.

‘NORTH ESK LODGE,

‘MUSSELBURGH, *January 29, 1901.*

‘. . . I cannot find anything from a particular case. It is only from a large number you can draw conclusions. But I will say generally that all overstrain at the growing age, either of mind or body, is bad.

‘I have boys here from naval Crammers; they were

* Lord Balfour of Burleigh was at this time chairman of the Educational Endowments Commission, which was then administering the Educational Endowments (Scotland) Act of 1882.—R. J. M.

† As referred to in the unquoted part of this letter, the *Spectator* had recently been advocating this measure.—R. J. M.

worked nine hours a day, and were pulled down by it. Any system which leads to working boys that number of hours at sedentary work is thoroughly unsound on physiological grounds. It is possible, of course, that another boy might achieve the same results on six hours a day sedentary work, which I think quite the extreme for a boy of fourteen, but from all I can gather the average boy has to work nine. I consider a paper-chase of sixteen miles equally bad. I suppose that some two-year-old horses might be run long races without injury, but yet no horse-trainer would sanction it. And yet we do with our human animals what we will not do with our other animals.'

TO CHARLES RUSSELL (O.L.), Indian Education Service (who had recently been appointed to the Professorship of English Literature at the Presidency College, Calcutta).

'DRUMRUINIE,

'ULLAPOOL, *July 25, 1899.*

'MY DEAR PROFESSOR CHARLIE,—Of course, I'm immensely in favour of English reading in schools. Did you never see a little book I'm sending you? What has set me against Literature as a school subject has been, first, the examinations in it from London University upwards. "Compare the styles of Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon"—got up from Spalding or tutor's note-book. "The context of the following passages"—I've seen a Pope marked by a crammer. Of course you may say "Teach without examinations." There I am with you most thoroughly. But is this practicable? Does not that Damned God "Marks" have a first commandment, and say "Thou shalt have no other God but me"? With their vile competitions which have disturbed the whole meaning and value of school-work (and made me regard it as inferior to games in education value, as things are), it is impossible to awaken interest in anything which does not pay. And can you make papers which don't produce this sickening sort of work?

'How I loathe every Shakespeare paper I've seen! Translate Sophocles. Yes, but what are you to do with Shakespeare? Read him at a hundred lines an hour,

stopping at all stations? Oh! It's a weary journey, with probably "notes on sources." Who cares a minnow for "sources"? I enjoy reading a play, and stopping here and there perhaps to explain some obscurity which really prevents understanding. But English Literature, as a school subject, is generally odious. Second, they made it a compulsory subject at Glasgow (thank God, after my time!), and put it 3 P.M., to take all remaining colour out of those poor sallow cheeks!

'If I had had to take notes about Shakespeare, and listen to chatter about Prior, and Gray, and Gay, and Marlowe, I wouldn't be here now. (*N.B.*—I walked sixteen miles Sunday, and am going to walk ten miles into Ullapool to-day—there being no water in river—with two boys who prefer walking, though we have a carriage. Oh! this air makes one so fit.)

'But class-room at 3 P.M.! and one subject more to make eyes fishier, and nerves feebler, and chest narrower, to make high spirits and vigour impossible! Now you know why I hate Literature as a subject.

'... There, I mustn't argue from the abuse. We don't read enough. Yet I hold that having the mental exertion of putting *Odyssey* into English is far more valuable as a school subject than reading any English, as Arnold said he would delight in teaching Shakespeare to Greek boys: they would have something to do with it.

'Do let me hear from you. I'd love to say more, but I'm over-written.

'*Vide July Journal of Education.* Storr asked me to write the letter.

'Do write. *Cura ut valeas.*'

TO THE PRINCIPAL OF A TECHNICAL COLLEGE.

'NORTH ESK LODGE,

'MUSSELBURGH, November 30, 1899.

'... I think I ought to draw your attention privately to a remark made by a boy who recently left this and is now at your College. He says, "I find an awful difference in my

time here compared with Loretto. The atmosphere outside here is bad enough, but, when we go into some of the classrooms in the College, it is too awful."

'Of course some people might think us maniacs about air here. I have not this term seen a schoolroom with all its windows closed. If I find one in the least stuffy, I make a row. It is punishable for boys to leave a room without opening all the windows, and the same with the bedrooms, though they generally sleep with the windows open. People often wonder at their complexions in chapel, and I give this as a chief cause.

'But surely I may appeal to you whether, of all the machines you have to deal with, the human machine is not the most important. I hope to see the day come when there will be compulsory inspection of every place of education, and absolute purity of air insisted on. But, in the mean time, I am sure I am right in calling your attention to what I have heard.

'The same fellow also speaks of occasionally getting football on Saturday, and, if he can't, of going for a long walk. I earnestly hope that the hours are so arranged that they can all get exercise every day, for the human machine can't prosper without it.

'I write in full confidence that if you guess who the boy is, you will not refer to this letter. I write simply in the public interest, and he has not meant to bring any charge against you, nor has he brought any which might not, I fear, be made against many institutions. When I was on the school board here I was constantly unhappy from a similar cause, though I did all in my power to put things right.'

The letter assailing the proposal to build upon the Recreation Ground of Glasgow University. The proposal was abandoned.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Glasgow Herald*.

'LORETTO, November 6, 1902.

'... I had hoped that the unanimous resolution of the late meeting of the General Council of Glasgow

University had put an end to all chances of encroachment on the University Athletic Field. But I am informed on excellent authority that this is by no means the case ; and I have been requested by some who feel keenly on the matter to ask you to allow me to bring the extreme gravity of the situation before the general public and the students, in order that every legitimate means of influence may be brought to bear upon members of the University Court.

‘The want of sufficient opportunities for outdoor exercise has been always a serious drawback to Scottish universities, and is one of the chief causes why so many young Scotchmen go to Oxford and Cambridge. I was for five years a student at Glasgow, and, fortunately, lived for four of them about a mile and a half from the old College in High Street, where I had to appear at the admirable hour of 7.30 A.M., and a second time at 10 A.M., my classes being over at noon, so that I ensured six miles’ walking exercise, and also used often to be benefited by a primitive game of football on the College grounds.

‘The last year I lived much nearer College, and got much less exercise. I have since realised that a continuance of such a life would have prevented my ever becoming a really strong man ; but, fortunately, on going up to Oxford as a Snell Exhibitioner, daily exercise on the river gave me qualifications for the work of life which would otherwise have been wanting. But of my fellow Snell Exhibitioners at Balliol no less than three entirely broke down before their final examination, one only of the three took honours at Moderations, not one at Finals, and all died young. They had been among the most brilliant students of their time at Glasgow. Such catastrophes did not occur among English public school men. Nor did the river and similar pursuits interfere at Oxford with intellectual success. To the best of my recollection six or seven First-Class men were members of the Balliol Eight during my residence at Oxford. Personally I can say that the rude health and high spirits which resulted from being in training for the boat enabled me to win a higher position in examinations

which took place on the same days as the boat races than I was entitled to on my usual form.

‘But I never heard the idea at Balliol (which at that time was far the most successful College in Class Lists and University Scholarships and Prizes, but was never during my residence lower than second on the river, and was also distinguished on the cricket-field, and in the racket- and fives-courts) that there was any sort of antagonism between outdoor and indoor work ; but rather did I hear on all sides of me that they were allies in the enterprise of fitting men for the battle of life. So also thought the great Dr. Jowett, who gave £3000, being nearly, I believe, his entire savings, for a cricket-field for Balliol College, because the field which it had was in many ways unsuitable.

‘The wisdom of these principles has been abundantly vindicated by results. There were never more than eighty undergraduates in residence at Balliol during my time there. In the 1899 edition of *Men of the Time*, I find that the following are still living: Sir Joseph Chitty, who three times stroked the Oxford Eight; Bishop Ridding, who rowed in Balliol Eight, and, if I mistake not, played in the University Eleven; Dr. Warre, Captain of the University Eight, and Headmaster of Eton; Sir Charles Rivers Wilson, financier of Egypt; Sir Edmund Monson, our Ambassador at Paris; Sir Godfrey Lushington, C.B., Permanent Secretary at the Home Office; Sir George Des Vœux, Governor of Fiji; Sir Arthur Kekewich; Mr. D. R. Fearon, Secretary to the Charity Commission; the Dean of Ripon; the Warden of Merton; the Rector of Lincoln; the Provost of Oriel; and Emeritus-Professor Lewis Campbell.

‘I have no doubt omitted some, and many more are to be found in *Who’s Who*, a much less exclusive book. Some of these men were not in any way athletic, but I can bear witness that none of these were of the sedentary student order.

‘Now, will any one venture to say that the facilities for outdoor exercise with which Oxford abounded had nothing to do with the future distinction and already long survival

of such men as I have enumerated ; or that anything like an equal percentage of subsequent distinction can be shown by universities which may have been less rich in opportunities for physical education ? Can any one doubt that Rhodes's residence at Oxford affected the terms of his wise and admirable will ? Certainly the late Principal of Edinburgh University, Sir Alexander Grant, did not take the view that the University had nothing to do with the health and physical well-being of its students. I can personally testify to the zeal with which he, along with Sir John Batty Tuke, Professor Chiene, and others, threw himself into the movement for obtaining a ground for Edinburgh University, and to his regret that he could not then obtain a nearer one than Corstorphine. And, lately, evidence led before the Commission on Physical Education by professors and others has echoed the complaint of the want of facilities for outdoor exercise at some of the Scottish universities, which has been felt by all who really care for the well-being of the Glasgow student. It has now, I fear, become impossible to obtain more exercise ground within reasonable distance of the University.

‘On the top of this comes the proposal to cut up and curtail the small field which exists at present by buildings for purposes of science. Since the days of the little ewe lamb I know nothing like it. I have an immense respect for science, but the greed of some of its professors is insatiable. And after all, what can science do for the surroundings of man which is at all comparable to what a wide and true application of its principles can do for the man himself ? The man is of more value than many electrical machines ; nor would any progress in discovery be welcome to the real lover of mankind, if accompanied by the physical deterioration of the race.

‘. . . It is, perhaps, too much to expect that any member of the University Court will condescend to read this letter, but it is written in the hope that it may stir into resolute and indignant action all well-wishers of the Glasgow student.’

Letters referring to what he called the 'coat superstition'—that is, the idea that in ordinary life the coat must never be removed, however overheated the wearer might be.

TO THE REV. C. G. GULL, Headmaster of the Grocers'
Company School, London.

'NORTH ESK LODGE,
'MUSSELBURGH, February 16, 1903.

' . . . The coat superstition is one which perplexes me. I can never see why you require a coat at seventy any more than a greatcoat at fifty.

'If a Loretto boy cycles in a coat on a hot day, and a prefect sees him, he gets licked, and his cycling is stopped.

'Once our Eleven went from this to Rossall to play a match, and never had a coat on all the journey, and till late the second evening.

'When you once begin to regulate life by common-sense, it is wonderful how strange irrational habits seem to you. I go all about school, take prayers and everything, in a shirt and trousers in warm weather. I am certain that discipline does not suffer; but if I went into school sweltering in black coat and gown, the boys would think I had gone mad.

'The great New Zealand school, Wanganui, has, by the wish of the boys, adopted our rational habits, and so have a few smaller schools. . . .'

TO THE REV. J. H. SKRINE, Warden of Trinity College,
Glenalmond.

'NORTH ESK LODGE,
'MUSSELBURGH, November 1, 1898.

' . . . I dare say you and others would think many of the corollaries that I draw upon my main proposition overstrained, but in trying to come to the truth about how to rear a good animal I have found myself so constantly thwarted by Mrs. Grundy that I have got perhaps

an inordinate hatred to her influence. And while perhaps about habits of regular exercise in all weathers, or in the crusade we have made against grubbing between meals and other things, I have had the great body of public opinion with me, yet where I interfere with Mrs. Grundy's special prerogative in the matter of costume, I have been met partly with opposition and partly with ridicule.

' . . . What we call "Lorettonianism" really means with me rationality in life. It is, in fact, trying to carry out Bacon's principle of applying science to the good of men in a new direction. Ambitious, perhaps, but still I believe in it. I am planning on my principle two articles which I hope to get into some of the good reviews—"The Breed of Man," and a "Plea for Rationality in Life." What an enormous relief it would be in the House of Commons some sweltering day, if the Speaker said, "Order, order. Honourable gentlemen will remove their coats and waistcoats!" And in ten minutes what fools they would think they had been before to suffer that unnecessary heat for no purpose whatever, not even for appearance, as I think you would say if you saw our white hall at dinner time on a hot day! . . . '

TO THE SECRETARY, Civil Service Commission,
London, S.W.

' LORETTO, *July 21, 1881.*

' . . . I venture to write to you about what may seem a minor matter, but it is one which has caused what seems to me reasonable irritation in some of my pupils, and to me partakes of the nature of a matter of principle.

' At the Indian Civil Service Examination and again at the Army Entrance, the weather on both occasions being extremely hot, and at the latter quite tropical, various candidates asked leave from the presiding examiner to take their coats off. Leave was politely refused. One of the boys told me that he had to put a piece of blotting-paper under his left hand to prevent the perspiration running down the paper. Now I don't put the matter as one of

comfort, though even from this low point of view I fail to see the advantage which can be claimed on the side of enforced discomfort. I take stronger ground. We are beginning to teach the elements of practical physiology in schools, and their bearing on life. Our descendants will wonder at our not having done this long ago. But to my mind it is wrong to preach where one does not practise, to teach principles theoretically and not to carry them out, at least where the harm of carrying them out prematurely is not demonstrably greater than the good.

‘Now physiology certainly teaches two lessons bearing on the subject :—

‘1st. Work of all kinds can be best done at a certain temperature of body. Everything tending to increase that temperature, if already too high, or to lessen it, if already too low, is prejudicial to work, and therefore wrong.

‘2nd. Excessive perspiration, especially if caused by clothing, diminishes the stock of vital energy, and predisposes to attacks of disease. The candidates are already subjected to a violent and, from a health point of view, prejudicial strain. Certainly their coming up to London in the height of summer, at their age, and probably (most of them) sadly overworked before, necessarily predisposes to disease, and often, I have no doubt, sows the seeds of future ill health. How careful then ought people to be not to do anything to aggravate these perhaps necessary evils!

‘My views are perhaps eccentric, and certainly unusual. But I don’t see where there is any flaw in my reasoning; the only point that can be raised is whether such questions should be brought under the domain of reason and science at all, or left to prejudice and custom.

‘At this School, no boy wears a coat in school in hot weather, and yet we have no weather as hot as it has lately been in London, and no schoolroom as stuffy as the examination rooms. Perhaps we may go further than is necessary, but I certainly teach boys that brain labour increases the bodily heat, and writing an examination paper against time very much increases it.

‘We can hardly wonder at our military authorities, with their unscientific training, still insisting upon clothes which produce catastrophes like the recent one at Aldershot,* but it certainly appears inconsistent in men who are presumably abreast of the knowledge and enlightenment of our days to insist upon candidates violating the known laws of health.

‘My letter would probably be unmeaning in 1981, but even if it is premature, I trust you will [consider] it.’

TO THE EDITOR OF *Health*.

‘LORETTO, *July* 1886.

‘. . . I am very glad to see you have raised the question about cyclists’ clothing. I have often doubted whether, as cyclists often dress, their exercise does more harm or good. Will you allow me to say a few words about this matter, premising that people whose final court of appeal is convention need not read any further? Cycling is pretty hard exercise, and it is often taken in warm weather. When people take hard exercise in warm weather, their clothing ought certainly, as you point out, to be entirely woollen, without any mischievous bandages, like starched linen collars, and it ought also to consist of no more plies than are necessary. In very warm weather, one ply of clothing is all that is necessary; more are hurtful. Again, when any one gets heated by hard exercise, he ought to have something additional to put on when the exercise ceases, or in the event of a cold wind springing up, or rain falling. Once again, the clothing, whether of one, two, or more plies, in which hard exercise is taken, should be absolutely loose, so as to allow perfectly free play to both throat and chest. I think it follows from this that the proper cycling dress in warm weather is simply a flannel shirt, with a loose blouse strapped on behind, as can be done quite easily.

‘I am not talking of a thing which I have not seen tried. As a schoolmaster, I encourage cycling, and allow boys to

* Deaths from heat apoplexy.—R. J. M.

go considerable distances, when time allows. Many boys cycle home at the beginning of holidays to distant parts of Scotland, and even of England. And I am not in the least afraid of any harm coming of this (except, perhaps, an occasional accident) if certain clothing rules are kept. These are : 1st. A boy must cycle in nothing but flannel—flannel shirt, knicks or shorts, and flannel or tweed coat. 2nd. Except in cold weather, *i.e.* when it is warm enough to cycle without his coat, he must have it strapped on behind. I have every reason to believe that these rules are kept. If they were not kept, I would discourage cycling. Let any cyclists who are not slaves to convention, and who often must have felt oppressed and incommoded by the “smart” uniforms and the throat ligatures which they have thought it the proper thing to wear (and which have really taken away at least a considerable percentage of the benefit derived from cycling), simply try the experiment of cycling as I have described ; and they will find out how little real inconvenience they suffer from the people who gape and stare at them as they are whirled by. If they feel shy, let them go in parties of three or four, so as to divide the stare. But like the first man who took off his coat to play lawn-tennis at a garden-party, or the first man who does any new thing that is rational, they will soon find plenty of imitators.’

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TO H. B. TRISTRAM (O.L.), Vicegerent of Loretto School.

‘DRUMRUINIE, ULLAPOOL, 1900.

‘. . . You may think I exaggerate the matter, but I am living for the cure of that large class of evils which are due simply to the tyranny of custom. I care far more for such reforms than for either work or games. For plenty of schools do these, and we are the only public school which at present is fighting the battle of rationality. I know you will do what you can, though, by necessity, your energies must mainly run in other lines, or the School

would tumble if the work and games were not made as good as can be.

‘. . . My dear Tim, you know I feel I haven’t so very long time left to do my work, and progress is very slow. So you must not be vexed with me if I jaw about the things I live for. Perhaps I think myself too necessary for it. But I have heard of no one else making a stir about even such an obvious wickedness as compressing the lungs of boys by the ordinary tunic. What other headmaster worries about keeping their throats free, or their getting oxygen every day, or sleeping with windows open, or overheated rooms, or school diet? Dukes tells me I am about the only one. So you must forgive a little conceit and egotism. I wish to God I was only one of a thousand. I would gladly retire into obscurity.’

Letters illustrating his dislike of black clothing as violating the laws of health and increasing gloom.

TO THE REV. H. T. S. GEDGE (O.L.), Dean Close, Leeds.

‘NORTH ESK LODGE,
‘MUSSELBURGH, November 27, 1899.

‘MY VERY DEAR SYDNEY,—. . . There is something about football I have always wished to say to you. It seems to me that your prowess in that line must immensely increase your influence with the Yorkshire working-man, and therefore you ought to play as long as you can.

‘The reason clergymen have often so little influence with some people is, I think, because of their caste appearance and prejudices. For me, for instance, I have no hesitation in saying that your horrible black apparel makes it very hard for a clergyman to have an influence on me. I always think that if a man does not know that he is decreasing his stock of energy by attracting the rays of the sun upon himself in hot weather, and also by sweltering in unnecessarily heavy garments, as well as investing with an unnatural gloom one

who ought to be the cheery messenger of glad tidings, he must either be ignorant of the laws of health and energy, or disobedient to them. Of course I know that one man might lose more than he gained by defying irrational traditions in these respects, but I think he ought to defy them wherever he can.

‘But to apply this to football—the more vigorous exercise a man takes the more likely he is to have inspiring power in his work, and spirit does more than ponderousness, quality more than quantity.

‘They will also feel that you have no nonsense about you, and it is for their nonsense that sensible men dislike the clergy, and only weak women and women-like men approve of them as a class.

‘I think you should probably throw in your lot with the Northern Union, much as I dislike its game. I suppose this would prevent you from playing in national matches, would it not? And it is for you to judge which is the most important for your influence—playing as a king among your working-men, or being looked up to by them as one of the great players of the country.

‘I know, though you won’t agree with me on all points, specially the “clerical blackness,” you will not be offended at my saying what I think.’

TO THE SAME.

‘NORTH ESK LODGE,
MUSSELBURGH, May 23, 1899.

‘I wish you every happiness in your marriage, but I am afraid I shall be away in the North when you are in Edinburgh. I will possibly be back before June 28th, and, in that case, my wife would tell you whether this is so, but if I am not back here, she would be delighted to see you both.

‘If I am back, you must prepare your future wife for a symphony in shirt-sleeves, if it is hot weather.

‘Do you think that the ministers of the gospel of joy will continue to swelter in black in the millennium? . . .’

The following letter compares, on a certain occasion, the health of term-time and holidays.

TO MRS. DAWSON, Ghyll Royd, Ilkley.

‘INVERAN HOTEL,

‘SUTHERLAND, February 22, 1896.

‘. . . This term not a single boy in any one of the School houses has been laid up, or kept in by any ailment whatever, except one or two slight accidents, and one boil. Yes, my own boy was in the house two days with a cold, which I thought a personal disgrace.

‘Yet eleven boys were unable to return in time after those abominable Christmas holidays. They keep them in rooms over 60 degrees. They drive them instead of making them run. They give them midnight feeds. They gorge them generally, and let them slack. And then they consider colds and bilious attacks sent by Providence for some mysterious purpose. Is it not so?’

A letter dealing with the subject of rational boots.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Scotsman*.

‘LORETTO, May 18, 1882.

Fashionable Deformity and Science in Schools.

‘. . . Your third leader of yesterday morning must give great satisfaction to every one who has at heart the great cause of setting free from the chains of unreasoning convention not only opinion on speculative matters, but the surroundings and habits of everyday life. But let me point out that, when you say “the insane custom of distorting the human foot now pervades every class of society that can afford to pay a little extra for that purpose,” you are ignoring a deplorable fact pointed out by Professor Flower in his *Lectures on Fashion and Deformity*. He shows (page 71) that the labouring classes suffer almost universally from foot deformity, as they have to buy ready-made boots, and that these are invariably of a maiming shape. He says that it is

only those persons who can afford to be specially fitted who are better off than poorer people who are obliged to wear shoes of the form which inexorable custom has prescribed. I think that people who comment on the extreme folly and sinfulness of fashionable female boots are apt to forget that the vast majority of men also commit offences, the same in kind, though less in degree. Every schoolmaster who studies the subject can endorse the assertion of Professor Flower (page 63) that there are very few, if any, "whose feet do not bear evidence of having been subjected to a compressing influence more or less injurious." I do not think that any one who knows the evidence (*vide* also Professor Meyer's well-known pamphlet on the subject) can fail to come to the conclusion that an amount of damage, till lately unsuspected, is being done by this cause. Corns and bunions are slight evils, and are no doubt gladly borne by those persons who think that the Creator's handiwork is essentially ugly, and must be reformed in accordance with fashionable ideas about the beautiful; but increased liability to sprains and spinal complaints, and greatly decreased power of locomotion, especially after the age of thirty or forty, are evils to avoid which many persons would be daring enough to encounter the ridicule of poor creatures who don't know any better.

'It is a very wholesome sign of the times to see the power of the press at last on the side of reform in such matters. The *Lancet* has been preaching for years, but then it has few readers but professional men. Few of these, I fear, when they visit nurseries, remonstrate strongly enough with mothers who are allowing their children's feet to become permanently deformed. For it is in the nursery the evil begins, although something can be done to restore the right shape of the foot at almost any time of life. And the harm done in the nursery does not end there. Not only is the desire to do as others do, whatever evil may come from it, strong in the young in proportion to the feebleness of their characters, but compulsion is employed on the wrong side exactly where it is most pernicious. A cadet lately at Sandhurst wrote to me about the suffering caused

by the regulation boots. Injury may be caused where there is no suffering, and where there is suffering the injury must be very great. I wonder how many miles *per diem* are taken off the marching power of the army by wrongly shaped boots, and tight and heavy uniforms besides. A regiment in Norfolk blouses and anatomical boots would march round one of ours, and have a far less percentage of men falling out on the march, as well as of chronic ailments.

‘There is, however, comparatively little use in attacking these things in detail. The subjects of military uniform, and of those overdone examinations which stunt physical development and ultimately weaken all the vital forces, can scarcely get a hearing when they are raised in Parliament. People look upon them as petty questions, and yet the principles which underlie them are really those on which our future vigour and greatness as a nation depend. . . .

‘To you, particularly, sir, the acknowledgment of all who care for human welfare is due, especially for two articles—one on the true use of the Meadows, and the other which has elicited this letter. But the real remedy lies deeper. Science, in its true sense, must be made part of education. The little bits of botany, chemistry, physiology, etc., which are at present taught do little good. They are taught as cram subjects, and, as religion too often is taught, as things having no bearing upon the conduct of life. Almost the most important things which a child can learn at school seem to me to be these :—

- ‘(1) A deep reverence for the laws of nature, and a belief that it is a religious duty to act in conformity with them.
- ‘(2) A general knowledge of these laws, especially in their relation to the well-being of men.
- ‘(3) A sense of the dignity of the human form as made by God in his own image, and of the impiety of distorting it, or preventing its free and natural development. ❧

‘All who wish to follow these principles into detail should

read Mr. Spencer's *Essays on Education*. No one will probably agree with everything which is said there, but I can hardly conceive reasonable man so constituted as to differ from the main principles of the book. Of this I am sure, that if all interested in education will do their best, each in his or her own sphere, to secure a beginning at the right end, the next generation will see an end put to tight-lacing, wrongly-shaped boots, throat-muffling, excessive clothing for decorum's sake, cities without time and space for the active exercise of all sedentary workers, premature forcing of the young brain, and a thousand other prevalent evils which all proceed from ignorance or neglect of the laws of nature.

'We may not reach the promised land ourselves, but let us help our children to get there.'

II.

LETTERS DEALING WITH 'LORETTONIANISM' OR RATIONALITY IN DAILY HABIT.

The rational or scientific temper.

Undated Fragment.

"... The actions which really receive the moral homage of the world are those which are dared by lonely men who act in direct defiance of the social behests of the society or the age in which they live, and who initiate by so doing a higher era of moral life." I forget who says it. I came across it in my rummagings, like a precious stone.'

TO HIS WIFE.

'... My dear, I should not have been born in nineteenth century. My mamma was an angel, descending by mistake before the millennium. Between us we had what will be—only separately. She descended with the angelic goodness. But they had to send the rationality after her from above, and the parcel arrived just in time for me. . . .'

TO HIS WIFE.

‘INVERAN HOTEL,
‘SUTHERLAND, February 14, 1894.

‘DEAREST,—What a plague that Hub is, always wanting something. Well, I want my *Evidence*, in one of the new pigeon-holes—two copies of it. There are a lot. I think I’m going to offer an article to Knowles based on it.

‘What are you thinking of, dear ?

‘To leap the rotten pale of prejudice,
Disyoke their necks from custom? . . .
Two heads in council, two beside the hearth,
Two in the tangled business of the world,
Two in the liberal offices of life,
Two plummets dropt for one to sound the abyss
Of science, and the secrets of the mind? . . .’
Ah! were we ‘a race
Of giants living, each, a thousand years,
That we might see our own work out, and watch
The sandy footprint harden into stone.’

Just because we are not that, I must be at something or other, and not just slacking, so send me the *Evidence*. I want to write “Cram and Education” first; and then “Health versus Indolence and Custom”; “Education and Sanitation.”

‘What gorgeous weather it is! Not good fishing, but made to live in. Nine degrees of frost just now (10 A.M.). Brilliant sun, no wind, just Inveran weather, in fact.

‘What a family those —s might be if they lived properly! And instead of their slim girls:—

‘Daughters of the plough, stronger than men,
Huge woman blowzed with health, and wind, and rain,
And labour.’

That’s my ideal.

‘Now, my darling double self, adieu! HUB.

‘P.S.—Always remember about your Hub:—

‘1. “Not intellectual.” A.B.C. [Master’s initials.]

‘2. “No sense of humour.” X.Y.Z. [Master’s initials.]’

TO HIS WIFE.

‘1901.

‘. . . I believe my main idea to be like others which have risen from obscurity to become so obvious that people said “there was nothing new after all.” It is the development of the Kingdom of Heaven in the particular direction of “rationality.”

‘The appeal now is—“What is usual?” If Lorettonianism becomes a creed, it will be to “What is best.”

‘A man for form’s sake biking in coat, etc., on hot day, would be as impossible as Suttee. So would the Aldershot massacre. So would the present system of every owner destroying salmon promiscuously. So would living on our capital of bottom fish by trawling. So would airless churches and offices. So would keeping growing human animals indoors all the daylight part of a winter’s day. So would our dreadful funeral customs, our big “lunches,” our “functions” generally.

‘I look back, and see that all the big reforms have been brought within the range of practical politics by one man, and that his work afterwards has usually appeared obvious.

‘The whole thing is so simple, when once done. It’s a method, a mode of thought, not a set of fads.

‘Take the cricket closure for one instance. I was opposed, or rather scoffed at, for years. “Not cricket,” etc., etc. And yet—now—can you imagine any one wishing to revive the absurdity of batting on to one’s own disadvantage?’

TO THE HON. GEORGE CHARLES BRODRICK, D.C.L.,
Warden of Merton College, Oxford.

‘October 30, 1900.

‘. . . It was an odd coincidence your article and mine appearing in the same magazine, for I have an idea that the germ of them both was sown in our conversation at Newhailes.

‘I am not sure that I quite agree with your use of the word “amateur.” I should have said a “nation of irrational animals.” There seems to me as much professional spirit of the wrong kind in the Army as in the Church. In both it is symbolised by their idiotic clothing ; in both the appeal is seldom or never to first principles, but to usage ; and that seems to me the essential mark of professionalism. Look at their dress, so trenchantly exposed by Conan Doyle. It is as utterly unsuited to modern warfare as the lance and sword are, and yet it goes on. An old boy of mine told me that he was captain of some Volunteer corps in South Africa. He taught his men to use their heads in taking cover, and did not lose a man, though he was often engaged. But some professional soldier came to inspect them, and asked “What sort of drill is this?” “Ant-hill drill,” was the reply. The same professional insisted on a church parade, a thing which you would think had been invented by the enemy of all goodness. The men would have delighted to go to a service, but here they were bothered about buttons and all sorts of nonsense on their day of rest. They appeared with most of their legs bare, having cut off the ends of their trousers to mend more necessary parts, and the fool insisted on their wrapping up their legs with cloths. Now is not that just as professional as the poor creature of a curate whom you may see cycling on a sweltering day in a long black coat, instead of, like any rational man, in his shirt-sleeves ?

‘The “amateur” (that is the rational element in South Africa—all our Colonials and many of our Volunteers) was on a par for efficiency with the Boers. It was the “professionalism” of the regular army which caused disasters. Can you doubt that if a genius like Cecil Rhodes had been made Commander-in-Chief at the beginning, the disasters would not have happened ? Many of the great generals, notably Cæsar and Cromwell, were civilians ; but our intensely professional spirit forbids the utilising of genius if it won’t come under the yoke of hard-and-fast rules. Whatever success I have attained here has been done by throwing aside professionalism, and symbolism like cap and

gown. We mix here with the boys with no artificial distance, and they don't talk to us with bated breath, but naturally. In hot weather we are all in the rational dress of flannel shirt and trousers, and none of those horrid starched bands round the neck, which may be very well for state occasions, but are sheer discomfort and folly for ordinary life.

'The professional spirit, in fact, is to me an equivalent of irrationality. Where I agree with you is that there is not, in many of our professions, half enough study of their practice from first principles. How many men in my profession have read and tried to carry out what is good in Herbert Spencer's *Essays on Education*? Or to study what vitally concerns boys' welfare, viz. the laws of exercise, diet, sleep, ventilation, and heat economy, in a scientific spirit? My enemy, Mrs. Grundy, is a typical professional. It is professionalism, taken in the sense in which I have always used it, which is the bar to all progress, the wet blanket to new ideas. It is professionalism which snubs freedom of opinion, stifles thought, and crushes genius.

'But still I see in what sense you use the word, and how what is to me the name of a spirit against which I spend my life in warring, has come to mean to you earnest and systematic study. . . .

'*P.S.*—I wish your nephew could be persuaded about the Army Examinations. For he is a rising man, and I have as great a respect for him as I can have for any man who enfeebles his throat (as I see from the photos) with those dreadful collars. Why can't some of them learn from Arthur Balfour, who looks like a free Apollo among some of the rest?'

To R. J. MACKENZIE (O.L.), Clifton College, Bristol.

'NORTH ESK LODGE,
'MUSSELBURGH, May 27, 1885.

' . . . As to eccentricity—I agree with what Mill says; but whilst it is true that violation of custom is of itself a gain, that is only when successful. If I went into Edinburgh

in my warm-day dining-dress, I would be wrong, because I would fail. But if I knew that it would succeed, that the next boiling day swarms of emancipated lawyers and parsons would be rejoicing in the new-found freedom of shirt and flannels, I would be right.'

TO H. F. CALDWELL (O.L.).

'INVERAN HOTEL,
'SUTHERLAND, *March 27, 1891.*

' . . . For myself I feel that, wherever there is a school trying to educate all round and not simply to cram the brain, and also to fight convention and not to adopt the ways and customs of the world around, there will be Loretto, even though Loretto itself, *i.e.* the ground, and brick, and stone, is no longer the scene of action. . . .'

TO H. B. TRISTRAM (O.L.), Vicegerent of Loretto.

'DRUMRUINIE,
'ULLAPPOOL, *July 18, 1900.*

'Now here is a true Lorettonian letter * from ——. It has done me good. At your discretion you might read it (or part of it) in hall, and say how pleased I am at an old boy caring so much about this.

'But why, oh why "lunatic" to parade twenty thousand in a dress which does not kill, or even make strong men faint? Is not the lunacy the customary buttoning up? This thing has really got on my brain.

'It seems to oneself so "lunatic" to have been gradually worked round to the belief that the world is mad in many of its most widely received maxims and opinions; and so utterly insane to be also forced into the belief that though many may think along with you at odd moments, oneself is the only man who has made it the business of his life to convince the world that it is insane in its way of looking at such matters.

'And yet every one who has ever pioneered a new line of

* On the subject apparently of a sensible military uniform.—R. J. M.

any kind has always had this to go through—the same hesitating cocksureness, the same engrossment in an idea which must seem out of proportion to other people. But here, you see, is an unsolicited testimony that when every one was crying out “head-dress,” I was right in saying “coats.”

‘But the thing is so obvious. Yes, as obvious as that the sun did not career round the earth, and that future sins could not be pardoned for money, and that steam was a force. But one man, often doubtless feeling alternately mad and despondent, made the truth a living reality. That’s the work Loretto has to do.

‘. . . But it wouldn’t do for every one to be as much a man of one idea (not “coats” but “all-round rationality in life”) as I am. I cannot take much interest now in merely speculative or scholarly questions which don’t bear upon my chief aim. Yet I know that you too are right, that if boys don’t plod at their paradigms, and persevere, and care for their games, they won’t be fit to help in my reforms, or in any other good work.

‘It distresses you more if the Q—s are extravagant. It would distress me more if one of them came back as an old boy and sat among ours on Fettes field on a broiling day with his coat on. And we are both right in our own ways. We are the necessary complement of each other.

‘*P.S.*— . . . I wonder if you understand how unhappy this Aldershot affair * has made me. Over what can’t be helped there is no use of fretting. But here is a hideous lot of misery and inefficiency caused by sheer pigheaded, wicked folly, “and my people love to have it so.” † I can’t really enjoy myself when I feel life beginning to ebb, and this work, which no one but myself seems to have at heart, not visibly progressing. However, this letter is cheering—the best I have had from any one for a long time.’

* Deaths from heat apoplexy. The same thing had happened in 1881. See p. 312.—R. J. M.

† Jeremiah v. 31.—R. M. J.

A batch of letters referring to the malign influence of convention upon physical habit, and the need of instilling the scientific habit of mind, if any progress was to be made.

TO HIS WIFE.

‘NORTH ESK LODGE,
‘MUSSELBURGH, September 1901.

‘. . . I say, have you seen that increase of consumption in the navy? The fools! Couldn’t they have foreseen, when they gave up mast and sail exercise and kept the sailors more below, what would happen?

‘Every direction one goes it is the same—no one thinking of the man himself. I seem to be marching, like Sherman, through a country void of reason; or looking, like Diogenes, for a rational man. I have only recently become alive to the fact that no one else (outside “Lorettonianism,” at least) is awake to this.

‘But I mustn’t preach too much, and yet how can one help it? I see that army tailors made a slouch hat for them, with the bend on the wrong side. And they are all gone on hats now—a red herring, when the real fox is the uniform and those thrice damnable collars. . . . Do they not know that the nape of the neck, of all places, should be kept cool?

‘A Sandhurst doctor wrote to me that he knew such things, but neither medical nor any other opinion had any weight with these fools. Oh! it isn’t the knaves that I hate. It’s the fools, pigheaded, swarming. I can hardly find a man who can discuss any practical subject unwarped by usage. And then one comes on columns about incense and church ornaments, and whether bread is bread or something else, and then people get angry and interested, whilst, if it is human health and comfort, and efficiency and common-sense, they don’t care.’

TO MRS. ROBERTSON, 8 Circus Place, Glasgow.

‘INVERAN HOTEL,
‘SUTHERLAND, February 22, 1891.

‘. . . . But my main point is that the difficulty about health is not to get or even to instil knowledge. The world would be a gloriously healthy place if people acted up

to what they know. Let me have up here any hundred children of both sexes. Give me *carte blanche*, even with my small knowledge, to regulate all their habits ; to feed, clothe, exercise, ventilate, put them to bed and get them up, as I please, for a year or two, and none of their mothers (with rare exceptions) will be going afterwards to schoolmasters and schoolmistresses, and saying, "John, or Mary, is a delicate child," as if delicacy was sent specially down from heaven, and didn't result from causes. Given food enough and house-room enough, there would not be ten delicate children in the country (except from accidents), if the known laws of health were carried out for three generations. But they can't be carried out. Any one would find himself in Gartnavel very soon who dared to carry them out in his or her own person. What is needed is not more Health Lectures, but to bring up young people in the habit of fighting convention as far as they dare and can.

' . . . P.S.—Let me give you a practical illustration. My youngest girl is at a day-school where there are morning and afternoon classes. My wife won't let her go to the afternoon classes in winter. Why not? Why, because if she does, she has no time for proper daily exercise. But the other girls go. Now I am sure all their mothers know that the lungs need to breathe in fresh air ; that air is fresher outside than inside (even though the schoolroom is kept aired, or no child of mine should go there) ; and that far more air passes through the lungs when in quick motion than sitting still. Well, the mothers know all this. No amount of Health Lectures would make them know it any better. But I have no doubt what they say when they get together is—"What a strange woman Mrs. Almond is! Why, she wears low heels, and boots with no points, and lets her daughter run about wild in the afternoon instead of learning the Departments of France and French verbs!"

' My belief is that if Health Lectures would attack convention and custom more, they would hit the root of disobedience to health laws. It is simply that people don't like to do differently from their neighbours. If I can have induced one Health Lecturer to drive at this point, I will not have troubled you both in vain.'

To A. WILLIS, St. Leonards, Bridgenorth.

‘NORTH ESK LODGE,
‘MUSSELBURGH, *March 13, 1899.*

‘. . . I heard a splendid maxim from a man who is staying here, and who preached in our chapel yesterday: “Hell is peopled by men who are afraid of the man in the next bunk.” The difficulty in the way of all rational reforms is that boys and girls are both brought up to look at things from the point of convention and not of reason. You may prove till you are black in the face that the throat ought to be bare, the feet a rational shape, and everything about chest and ribs be absolutely loose; you may also prove that no room should be kept above fifty-four, that every one ought to get at least two hours in the open air during daylight, that people who have been travelling should walk home and not drive, if possible, etc., etc.; but everywhere you are met, not by what is right, but by what people do.’

To J. DUHAMEL.

‘NORTH ESK LODGE,
‘MUSSELBURGH, *November 15, 1900.*

‘So far as I know public schools in general, my great grievance against them is that everything goes by usage. A boy, for instance, may not wear flannel trousers or flannel shirt till he is in an Eleven, or he may, or may not, tuck his trousers up—not to keep them clean, but because it would be “side.” But usage and not reason seems to me to be the ordinary court of appeal, and that is the real source, to my mind, of our “absent-minded Army.” Routine and not reason is appealed to. “Regulation” is a final word.’

To W. GRENFELL, M.D., 181 Queen Victoria Street,
London, E.C.

‘NORTH ESK LODGE,
‘MUSSELBURGH, *April 6, 1899.*

‘Strike at custom, and you strike at the root of the worst of the drink evil. A true Lorettonian will be deaf to the

argument—"Must have a drink upon this bargain, because it is the custom." Let him defy custom by biking with his coat off, and he will defy it also by not drinking when he doesn't want to; and he will be much more ready to crusade on the drink question when it falls into line with a multitude of others.

'I admit the evils are gigantic; the only question is what is the best way of meeting them.

'As to moderate drinkers, I knew that tables could not divide the two classes, which are: 1. People who drink too much without getting drunk; 2. The really moderate ones, like myself now. I once belonged to class one, but found no difficulty in limiting my allowance, whenever I found it better for me.

'But I was never taught to reason on these matters. I knew it was a sin to get drunk. No one had told me it was a sin to eat fast, to cramp my throat, to sit in close rooms, to neglect exercise, or to drink more than was good for me, so long as I didn't get drunk. Once inoculate people in the major premise, and the minor premises can be proved to them one by one. The Kingdom of Heaven will be one of universally applied rationality, and the working out of this is surely a labour of love. . . .'

The irrationality of military uniform. The reader should note the date of this letter.

To —.

'LINKFIELD HOUSE,
'MUSSELBURGH, July 10, 1881.

'Many thanks for your letter. If I have exaggerated, I am sorry. Every uniform I have seen has been padded. I am certain that they are infinitely too tight, heavy, and stiff, and, in almost every conceivable respect, unwholesome. . . .

'It is almost well, I think, that the recent catastrophe* has been so great. I believe six have now succumbed. Now,

* Deaths from heat apoplexy at Aldershot. See also pp. 312, 325 above.—R. J. M.

I have been here nineteen years. Every Saturday more than a hundred boys (a hundred for the last few years only), and one or two Elevens of men have been in the cricket-field during the heat of the day, and on many other afternoons often too, I may say almost daily exposed for nearly an hour to the heat of the sun just at midday. Not only have we never had a casualty, but I have never known of injury caused by the heat. I do not even recollect a boy or man fainting. . . .

‘But our custom is that not only players but all our boys are in white flannel, with shirt open at throat, no tie or bandage of any kind. If we had them on the field—much more, exercising on the field in the dress which, as probably the least of several evils, they still wear for “church parade”—I am sure that a hot day would add several to the sick list. But our “church parade” dress is nothing like as bad as a soldier’s. It is much lighter and looser, and I won’t allow a collar which touches the throat.

‘I would like to see an experiment tried like a celebrated one which tested the sustaining powers of beer, coffee, etc. (infinitely, I need not say, to the advantage of the non-alcoholic drinks). Let there be three men, A, B, and C. On first hot day let them all march ten miles, A in full military dress, B in church-going civilian dress, C in Garibaldi shirt, or Norfolk blouse and loose trousers, and no fetters at the throat. On second hot day B military, C church-going, A garibaldic. Third, B garibaldic, A church-going, C military. Let them be tested by weight, spirometer, etc., and let them also write an account of their experiences. I know what the result would be quite well. I think the case has only to be put. I think also that this is going on the true lines of scientific investigation. Physiology points out the natural consequences of profuse expenditure of perspiration, and of impeded action of chest and throat. All experience shows roughly that the expected consequences happen, viz. that there are no compensating advantages from tight, heavy clothing.

An experiment like the one I have detailed would make the case one of quantitative scientific certainty. The great

difficulty is to get people to look at these matters from the scientific point of view at all. They look on them, as they do on their beliefs and practices of all sorts, from the point of view of "accursed custom," till they get a rude shock from some direction or another.'

TO A PARENT.

'October 11, 1900.

'I suppose there is always some one thing weighing on my mind more than others. At present I am constantly sad about the wickedness of military uniforms. To me it has become such a crime to compress any one's breathing organs. It is a sin of the deepest dye against light and knowledge. I have not said half what I feel about it. I have a lot of letters from old pupils about it which nearly make me cry. They tell me how they are tightened up in the army or volunteer regiments, so that they cannot move in the day anything like the number of miles which they can do as sportsmen, nor as quickly; and how the whole economy of their circulation, digestion, etc., is injured and obstructed by this idiotic folly. I tell you, at the present moment, that I would vote for any particular party who would knock out this false idea of "smartness."

'You know Sir Edward Grey well; could you ever bring the subject before him?'

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Spectator*.

'LORETTO, May 10, 1902.

'... Will you allow me, as a life member of the Lads' Drill Association, and at present making arrangements to overcome difficulties about a rifle-shooting range for the School which I represent, to express my satisfaction at your remarks in the *Spectator* of March 1st, towards the close of your article on "Compulsory Volunteering"? I have been hitherto opposed to cadet corps, simply on account of the cadet tunics which I have seen, and my mistrust of the military authorities, and of their worship of the fetish,

"smartness," in this and kindred matters. At one great review before the late Queen the Volunteers were compelled to march past without waterproofs in torrents of rain, utterly regardless of the fact that many of these men and boys had to travel long distances without a change of clothing. Many became victims of rheumatism for life; many suffered the tortures of rheumatic fever; and life and strength were recklessly sacrificed to this military fetish. Again, on a recent field-day at Aldershot several were killed, and many underwent great and useless suffering, not from the heat, for there was no report of any injury to either haymaker or cricketer on that day, but from the clothing. It was not from the head-dresses, for I had the testimony of a friend who described the perspiration as oozing through his thick military collar, that several "fell out" under the shade of trees. It was simply from the clothes. You speak truly of "the sensible dress of sailors." Is it not also "smart"? It has been proved that, when sailors and soldiers have marched in company on a hot day, not a single sailor "falls out," though some of the soldiers do. It is again proved to demonstration that tight clothing not only obstructs the free play of the breathing organs, and, consequently, the oxygenation of the blood, but that it intensifies both heat and cold. And yet it is "smart" for a soldier to be tightly dressed, and all considerations of comfort, mobility, and health are cast to the winds. I have felt keenly about this subject for years, and have received much evidence about it. An old pupil, a distinguished mountaineer, wrote to me that in the "trussed fowl" condition he could accomplish a maximum of ten or twelve miles per diem. When rationally attired, he could walk thirty or forty miles over hills. I cannot understand the infatuation which has prevailed. Things are now better during actual warfare. But surely for the drill and manœuvres which train for it, freedom and quickness of movement, and everything which makes for the maximum of exertion with the minimum of exhaustion are matters of the first importance. And, while suffering, and injury to health, and loss of life are inseparable from actual war, it is simply wicked, in

the face of modern physiological knowledge, to bring about any of these evils without any reason whatever except inveterate prejudice. Till lately it seemed hopeless to fight against this prejudice. With the exception of your remarks and some very telling words of Sir Herbert Maxwell's in an article in the *Nineteenth Century*, this side of the question has been ignored in all the discussions on compulsory service which have come under my observation. Here and there, however, there are a few signs of the dawn of common-sense. In compliance with a representation from the Lads' Drill Association, the War Office has sanctioned a loose Norfolk jacket and free and open neck for cadet corps. But I have only heard as yet of its being adopted by one British school. That great New Zealand school, Wanganui, has gone a step further. Its cadet corps, in a uniform of grey flannel shirt and short blue trousers, was inspected by General Sir Hector Macdonald, who said it was the most sensible uniform he had seen. And so it is for drill and manœuvres in warm weather, though for our climate generally a loose blouse or Norfolk jacket is a necessary adjunct. You remark: "No doubt for the moment the active-service uniform of the soldier—a Norfolk jacket and trousers—is sound enough, but how long will he be allowed to keep it when the war is over?" This exactly expresses my fears. In my own sphere, keen as I am to have my boys trained in rifle-shooting, and in such military drill as is not obsolete, I cannot at present see my way to a cadet corps. I do not trust the military authorities, and do not wish to come in any way under their thumb. I am a headmaster of forty years' standing. In my early days I was confronted by a similar fetish in my own profession. I was told that if I came into school in a light coat, if I did not insist on boys sweltering through the dog-days in coats and waistcoats and stiff collars, that discipline would suffer. The bubble has been pricked. In hot weather we do not wear light coats, but none at all, and our throats are as free as the sailor's. I have never heard it suggested by any one that discipline has suffered, or that authority among us is less respected or obeyed than if we were perspiring and sticky

in broadcloth and the superincumbent weight of academic gown. I have been reminded of the old story of the victory of Christianity in Egypt. There was still one gigantic idol. It was believed that sudden death would be the fate of any one who violated its sanctity, till one day a sailor climbed up with an axe in his hand to the head of the idol. To the horror of the bystanders, he smote the idol's head with the axe. An army of rats rushed out. And this is the end of all old irrational superstitions, when they are once vigorously attacked. I cannot resist saying that some day the fate of military "smartness," as distinguished from the genuine smartness of the sailor or the cricketer, will be expressed by the one word "Rats!" *Solventur risu tabulae*. I sincerely trust that before any form of "Compulsory Volunteering" is introduced, some guarantee will be given that the military authorities are converted to the gospel of rationality. . . .'

To G. G. COULTON, 42 Mile Road, Eastbourne.

'NORTH ESK LODGE,

'MUSSELBURGH, September 22, 1902.

' . . . I write now on a more practical point. Of course I have read your views in your two pamphlets about the army. Personally my prejudice against conscription is insurmountable. I feel there are a number of people, like what I was as a young man, the whole bloom and joy of whose life would have been destroyed by having to live in public, and under anything like military rule. And it seems to me that to rear men like Ruskin, Herbert Spencer, Mill, Jowett, Newman, and all men whose work has been the outcome of long years of meditation apart from the rush and hurry of life, would be impossible under the system of universal conscription. It would tend to complete a process in which lies the great danger of civilisation, namely, the reducing of every one to one level type. And military discipline tends to crush out originality and initiative; and I do not think you can give one instance of a soldier who was also a great thinker. Some great thinkers have, doubtless, inspired nations to fight for freedom at critical moments,

but they have not had the God within them mutilated by the "goose step" and the chatter and movement of barrack life. You do not seem to me to meet such subtle difficulties. . . .'

*Letters referring to the difficulty of maintaining a School
conducted on rational principles.*

TO H. F. TRIPPEL, The Military College,
Onslow Hall, Richmond.

'NORTH ESK LODGE,
'MUSSELBURGH, September 27, 1902.

' . . . I am afraid that our surroundings at Loretto will not admit of any considerable expansion. And indeed I don't know that we shall have the chance of it. Mankind, and still more so womankind, have an instinctive horror of the "new," and the truer it is the more they hate it. And they especially hate the new when it is obvious. The subtle reason is that they feel rebuked for not having seen the obvious for themselves. *E.g.*, I had people here from Egypt yesterday who are sending a small boy here. Lady talks of the heat of men's tweed clothing there. I show them photos of self, prefects, etc., as we are all day on a hot day—in flannels, and one ply; not one thing above another, with a non-conducting layer of air between. It is obvious. But then people go and say that we make boys wear no clothes all the year round. So Mrs. — says that "Charley" is too delicate for the "treatment." Then, of course, they say it is all play and no work. Simply because by getting boys to lead a rational life they have good wind for football, they think that we must do what appears to them the way to get good football, viz., to play three hours a day. In fact, the average man or woman put themselves in imagination into the place of the person who is doing anything new, and that imagination builds up a structure of rule of thumb engineered by insanity. I think we are lucky to have so many boys, in spite of that she-devil, Mrs. Grundy. So I am afraid there is no opening for a new man here. . . .

‘But I am so delighted to think of any one attempting the rational, as you are doing, though it is a steep and thorny path. I hope to be able to send you pupils sometimes. You let them sit in shirt-sleeves, I think? That is to me the “outward and visible sign,” etc. Also, may a boy be among you, and wear low collars without being coerced or jeered at by the rest? Ask your pupils this, please. I knew of a boy in a public school Sixth who wanted to keep a low neck, and the Grundy ones coerced him into encasing it with starch instead of leaving it exposed to the winds as it should be.

‘Surely you can have “Grinds” anywhere? One of my former colleagues has got a house at Brighton College. An old boy visited him, and he said the whole party went a “Grind” in their shirt-sleeves. Now surely Brighton is the Vanity Fair where they worship the Golden Image of the Grundy, and yet Faithful did not suffer for his heresy.

‘Excuse this rambling letter. If you are ever in Scotland, you must come and see me, but remember I am never both at home and disengaged, unless by appointment. . . .’

To C. G. ATKINSON, Temple Observatory, Rugby.

‘NORTH ESK LODGE,

‘MUSSELBURGH, *October 24, 1898.*

‘. . . As to progress being made, in some directions it certainly is, but in all the endless discussions on education the physical is kept in the background. What would Plato or the Greeks have said to choosing warriors purely by bookwork? And I very much doubt whether the strain on growing boys is not now greater, and the hours spent in the open air less at Rugby than they were in the time of Dr. Arnold. . . . I would consider the Chinese punishment of depriving of sleep as less dangerous than the depriving of exercise. It would be much better to put a boy on bread and water than to do that.

‘This pressure for scholarships and other appointments seems to me to be destroying the spontaneousness of life, physical, social, and intellectual, of the abler boys. I am

standing out against it here. I would not accept entrance open scholarships if they were offered, because they are a bribe to the overstraining of the minds and nerves of little boys. But it is hard to keep up an unendowed and necessarily expensive School without having the material for winning "successes," as they are called. The attitude I have assumed has caused us to remain stationary for ten years, and I doubt whether the only attempt that I know of to carry out Herbert Spencer's great maxim may not in the end prove a failure. I have been here thirty-seven years, and cannot last for ever. I am sure, however, in these days of overgrown towns and general strain of life that the maintenance of our national supremacy in nerve force (for that is the secret of it) will be hopeless, unless the fact is more fully recognised than it is. And if I ever speak in a pessimistic tone, it is because I have felt myself for years "like a pelican crying in the wilderness."

'I should be very glad indeed to know that the principle of the physical coming first was loyally accepted in the English schools. If I could feel that all their rules and institutions about exercise, diet, ventilation, temperature of rooms, and clothing were regulated purely by reason, I would not then greatly care whether Loretto survived me or not.'

*Letters dealing with the nature of his work, and the future of
Loretto after his own demise.*

TO MRS. MIRRLEES, Redlands, Glasgow.

'NORTH ESK LODGE,
'MUSSELBURGH, March 11, 1899.

'... A great deal of what you say is true, and it is all very kind. I still think you ascribe more to my influence than it deserves.

'Of course, my successor will not be another of me, but I do want my friends to see the importance, if an unendowed School is to survive, of its being recognised that Loretto has caught hold of certain principles which can be carried out

independently of the individuality of the man who applies them, and that these principles differ from those of every other school I know, except Routenburn.

‘Loretto is a humble attempt to carry out, in one particular line, the Christian idea of the establishment of a Kingdom of Heaven upon earth. That kingdom must be a great many things besides being rational, but it must also be rational. Our modern society is not rational, and Loretto is an attempt at being so, and at referring the arrangements of life to first principles, as far as that can be done.

‘I have no copy of my last letter, so excuse me if I repeat myself.

‘But I will take the one point of the making a matter of right or wrong of questions of eating, which is not done in other schools. Grubbing is licensed in every other public school I know of, and it not only, by creating a craving in the stomach, leads up to nipping, but it also weakens the digestive powers for life.

‘Again, an old boy writes to me the other day that his father said to him lately that he wished he had been taught the *duty* of exercise when he was young. And if any Loretto boy distorts his feet, or leads an irregular life of any kind, he knows he is sinning against light and knowledge.

‘I could, of course, multiply these illustrations to any extent. But what I am driving at is that the only chance of the School being perpetuated is the belief among its friends that they are far more essential to it than the individuality of any man.

‘You speak of Rugby. Under Temple it was even more than it was under Arnold. . . . Again, Arnold was an individuality rather than an originator of any practical reforms. He said he knew he had these to do, but he died at forty-seven. . . .

‘So far as my individuality is concerned, I would be a fool to wish to stamp myself on future generations, but, so far as certain special reforms are concerned, my spirit would be as vexed if Loretto^d was to retrograde as Stephenson’s would be, if they went back to mail-coaches.

‘I claim to have brought in ideas into school life totally independent of any personal character I may or may not have, and therefore I trust that my work may extend far beyond the comparatively few pupils I may have influenced. I hope this is not too ambitious, but it is a life and death question with me.’

TO H. B. TRISTRAM (O.L.), Vicegerent of Loretto.

‘DRUMRUINIE LODGE,
‘ULLAPOOL, 1901.

‘. . . Many men have more personal magnetism than I have. I was an outsider at College, and I believe that nearly all the power and influence I have had is due simply to my being the outstanding and determined advocate of common-sense, coupled with great love of boyhood and much combativeness of disposition. Any one with any brains could have built up a school on principles which are obvious when put into practice, and, of course, when a man has so far succeeded in fighting the Grundy one single-handed, he gains a certain amount of loyalty and admiration, as any one does who battles against apparently hopeless odds. And many men if they had equally perceived the obvious, and made up their minds to realise it, would have made far more converts, and done the work better than I have, because they had more magnetic force.

‘If you, in your own way, take on the touch from me, and don’t care a damn for Mrs. Grundy, you will succeed, and make in many ways a sounder Loretto than the present. But there are a few things I want to say to you when we meet. But aim at giving life and organisation to the neglected obvious—an aim which goes through the stages of derision, opposition, and triumph, and you have the secret of every big reform.’

The Head was much distressed, during almost the whole of his career, by the extent to which Loretto boys conventionalized themselves after leaving School. The following letters refer to this point.

ALMOND OF LORETTO

TO HIS ELDEST SON, GEO, at Oxford.

‘NORTH ESK LODGE,
‘MUSSELBURGH, *July 15, 1899.*

‘. . . T—— came down the other day in one of those criminal throat-weakening stocks. He had been laying the seeds of future bronchitis by playing golf in it, which to me is as bad as weakening the liver by tipping without getting drunk. I fairly lost my hair. . . . Poor chap, but I was rather hard on him, for he means well, though he worships in the House of Rimmon too much.’

TO NORMAN M‘LACHLAN (O.L.), Vicegerent of Loretto.

‘DUNKELD, *July 12, 1887.*

‘. . . I have tried to analyse my inrooted aversion to O.L. matches. I believe it is this. I dare say I have told it you mostly before, but let me put it on paper. So long as certain external protests against what I think noxious customs are an essential part of any schemes I have, so long is it in the power of O.L.s coming to Loretto to do me worlds of mischief, to undo my work, and undermine my influence, without their saying one word. This is mostly the case when they come *en masse*. The visible contrast used to be striking. Moral: “Head’s whims are all well for schoolboys, but when fellows come to an age we all know to be wiser than Head’s age, viz. 19-25, see what they think of the whims, how they return to common-sense, and do as other people do.” Well, I have felt in great measure O.L.s pulling against me instead of with me in these matters; but much less so lately (mainly due to Bertie Caldwell). But (I speak what I have known and seen) when boys fresh from School have funkcd coming down in whites, when the old boys have been playing in ties and scarves, and the present boys with free throats and no millinery, etc., etc., how could I do anything but feel that a lot of O.L.s on field together were injuring my influence, and you know what subtle cords of connection there are in my mind between such things and our moral tone—at least, I can’t

work one without the other. Nor do I believe that if I had not for some time set my face against assemblages of old boys at Loretto, that you would have seen "the field of poppies" or the coolness in Princes Street,* for which I did not think things were ripe. But for the dress question, including that of the collars, you would have seen O.L. matches every year, and probably the team dining with me, like a set of old boys, afterwards. You would also have seen me far more on the field at matches.

'I know that the thing has been thoughtlessness on the one side, and over-sensitiveness on the other. But none the less has it done harm. Mind, I am not such a fool as to think that old boys, even at Loretto, should go on altogether like present boys. But they know my main points, free throats, absence of millinery and dandyism in games (being a main source of the expensiveness and swagger of the same), not funkng whites (point carried), and showing the boys that they don't think "coats off" indecent.

'And now I know that things have changed, and that, in spite of precious little help from old boys till just lately, freedom and common-sense in such matters have been gaining ground, and paved the way for rational principles and resistance to grooves in other things. I don't like coming to the ground, for I seem like a spy.

'In a year or two, if I am spared, I hope the old sore feeling will have died out altogether.'

At the end of his life he was much cheered by the growing success of his ideas. I append two late letters which illustrate this feeling.

TO HIS WIFE.

' 1902.

' . . . Now that I have time to turn round I see how thankful I should be for an amount of success which is rare

* This refers to the first occasion on which the Loretto boys, on their way to the Fettes match probably, walked along Princes Street in their red coats and white flannels. This was a very unusual thing to do at the time.—R. J. M.

for any one who starts a thing which is really new. And yet not new. It is only putting into a concrete and living form principles which are floating all about. One ought rather to say "alive" than "new." Every principle which Luther embodied in his protest existed before him. But he made a living whole, a going concern, out of them.'

TO A. M. PATERSON, (O.L.), Master of the Loretto
Preparatory House.

'DUMRUINIE,
'ULLAPOOL, June 28, 1902.

' . . . I don't think I have been so well and fit for years. Well, it is so. My real work is increasing. All manner of people are writing to me, and sending me questions on my special subjects. Ten of me could be fully occupied now in pushing and advancing and developing the Gospel of Rationality. . . .'

III.

LETTERS ILLUSTRATING HIS ATTITUDE TO INTELLECTUAL
EDUCATION.

*Letters dealing with the evils of intellectual overpressure,
competitive examinations, and the cramming system.*

TO NORMAN M'LACHLAN (O.L.), (then a Master at an
English Preparatory School).

'INVERAN HOTEL,
'SUTHERLAND, March 20, 1883.

' . . . I could form a better estimate if I saw the papers set. Could you send me any of them? For my own instruction I particularly want to see the History and Geography, for there Loretto is not at all on right lines. I would also like some of the Arithmetic and the continuous Prose, and the Sixth and Fifth Grammar. But even with-

out the papers I can say that both the absolute standard of age reached, and the obvious evenness of the work, and the absence of failures is to me surprising. I don't know whether other preparatories attain their ends as well; one thing I am sure of is that I shall not easily find out. Schoolmasters whom I meet seem to me, however excellent, wrapped up in the consciousness of their own unapproachable finality, and no more disposed to look out for points where other people beat them than cooks, or cricket professors, or tenors are.

'You will say "Aren't you as bad or worse? Don't you think Loretto better than the lot of them?" Certainly I do, because I regard it as on the search after what is true and right, obeying the laws of nature in some lines where most schools break them outrageously; but conscious that, in making this search, we are not only yet far from the truth, but not doing many things so well as those who have narrower aims, and as we might and ought to do them.

'... My objection to the Report is a very brief and a very strong one. The ages are just two years too young. Alter your Sixth Form ages to 15, and allow one little prodigy of 13 to be in it (possibly, for I would scarcely like the exception), and assure me that as soon as a boy looked overgrown, or pale, or slack, he was sent away to run wild for a term, then I would say that the results are as near my ideal as they could be. Barring this, that I would wish even young boys to know a good deal (taught in an interesting way, and not for examinations) of physics and astronomy. I would also like to know what sort of books they read when left to themselves.

'... Does it ever strike you if these are your boys at 13 (*i.e.* up to a Smalls standard every way, and in some ways above it), what will they be at 18-19, and what at 22? As a fact, do your boys trained for public school scholarships go on improving? Do they intellectually fulfil their early promise? And do they grow up robust, hardy men with firm wills, strong characters, hearty good-humour, power of influence, enthusiasm for good? Alas! I fear it

is the other way. I fear that this too early development weakens for after life a boy as it does a vine. It's too long a subject for a letter, but, so far as I know the facts and the physiological necessity of the case, the whole modern system of the scholarships and other competitive examinations is tending carefully to select and then to emasculate the naturally best intellect of the country. *On dit* that ——'s boys were overforced and did nothing afterwards. To sum up—Your means to your end seems admirable, your methods successful, but the end itself an utterly wrong one for boys of your ages. What would the "body" doctors say to us, if by a system of training we had a three-mile race under 14, done by our best boys in 24 minutes and by the average in 28? Very much, I take it, what a "mind" doctor, if you could catch one and get his opinion, would say to you.

'Now show the whole of this to Mr. H——, if you please, and if he suspects half as many defects at A—— as I know of at Loretto, he won't be offended with any one who speaks out what he thinks. . . .'

TO E. P. FREDERICK (then a Master at Loretto).

'STRATHAN,

'LOCH INVER, *September 13, 1889.*

'My argument about Examinations was not drawn from my own case only, but from the fact that all my contemporaries at Glasgow went through without Examinations. The stimulus of the classes in general was magnificent, and the teaching of at least four Professors whom I remember could not, I think, have been given by men jaded with looking over paper-work. The absence of such strain on educators was a distinct benefit, and I don't believe that the net loss to the educated was great, if any. I believe that the English schools have greatly gone down in real and all-round efficiency since the masters became overtaken with this modern system. But do as you please, only don't work yourself out of all vigour and freshness. . . .'

TO E. P. FREDERICK.

'NATIONAL HOTEL,
'DINGWALL, N.B., June 8, 1900.

' . . . The glory of these "reforms," "opening up," etc. that they closed the services to poor men !

'Oh those damnable examinations! I believe I'd die willingly if, like Samson, I could pull down that accursed building on the top of me.

'However, I told the father that the best chance was a Navy Crammer. But it would be at the risk of ruining the boy, body and soul. What do these pedants care for such trifles? I mean the guilty souls who made the system. . . .

' . . . Did you see I got the loose cadet uniform and bare neck sanctioned by War Office, through Lads' Drill Association, of which I'm a Life Member. That's as great a victory as I ever gained.

'*Morning Post* had a shirt-sleevy leader—I wonder who wrote it—and I dictated a letter backing them up two nights ago. That's the sort of work I care for, practical reforms in human life, where prejudice goes t' other way.

' . . . I believe that pain, in its wide sense, is the only evil ; but that the pains of our emasculated life are in sum greater than those of war—till the laws of health become believed in as a moral code—from temperance to shirt-sleeves—and that's the next great stage in human progress.'

TO THE REV. CANON TRISTRAM, The College, Durham.

' . . . The question referred to is, so far as the navy is concerned, of an importance which makes me shudder.

'By an ignorance of boy nature and dangers which is to me incomprehensible, they have fixed an age (fifteen and a half) for naval cadetships—too old for a preparatory school, and too young to have any advantage from a public school, which indeed will not make special arrangements (of an extremely bad kind educationally) for boys who are to be

there so short a time. The consequence is that boys, at the age when passions which they do not comprehend are rising within them, are herded together at Crammers' whose whole energies are taxed to make them pass, with all the spirit and elasticity taken out of them by nine or ten hours of cram.

'Two of these victims have come here this term, unable to pass from some slight vision defect, etc. Poor boys! The roses out of their cheeks. . . .'

TO THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY LEAGUE.

'I have been strongly urged to join the Navy League, but it seems to me that you are ploughing the sand.

' . . . Guns and ships are important, but still more important is the man behind the gun and the man on the ship. There is no doubt that the absence of mast and sail gymnastics, and also the large amount of time now spent by sailors in harbour and between decks in comparison with what used to be done in the old days of sailing-ships, must undermine the physique of the sailor. And you must have seen statistics which prove that the cause is producing its effects, as might have been expected by any one who regarded the man himself as more important than the machinery. But more within my own knowledge, as a matter of personal knowledge and observation, is the deep and lasting injury which is being done by the competitive examinations for midshipmen. It is a minor point that the education which these boys are getting is an utterly bad one—it does not train them to think, but only crams them with information, which will soon be forgotten; and does everything which an examination can do to make book-work distasteful to them for their lives—but far more serious than this is the injury which is being inflicted on these young boys from a physical point of view.

'What has immediately caused my writing this letter to you was a conversation which I have just had with a pale-looking new boy of fifteen, who has just come here. He

was disqualified for the navy on account of, as I understand, some slight defect of eyesight, of which, of course, I am no judge. But the boy tells me he has had at least ten hours a day of sedentary work. This, to my mind, is a wicked violation of all that physiology can tell me about the welfare of human animals.

‘It is impossible that our naval officers can have the spirit or the endurance of past days if they are devitalised in this way at the most critical stage of human life, which I take to be from fourteen to seventeen. The mischief then done is irreparable, as I have seen in numerous cases. It is not only that a boy so maltreated is less able to resist the germs of disease, or [more likely to] develop definite constitutional disorders, but the want of abundance of oxygenated blood tells upon the brain, and prevents the development of all brain qualities of the active sort. A boy so trained might probably, if he lived, be quite fit to be a professor, if care was taken he should have no disorderly students to coerce; or, still better perhaps, to pursue critical research in a study, or scientific research in a laboratory. But for dealing with men and affairs, and, most of all, for any life which requires abundance of energy and high spirits, such a training is the worst that can be imagined.

‘The case of the army is bad enough, as has been abundantly shown and has never been refuted, but the case of the navy is worse, because it takes boys at the age when their chief business should be to grow and develop, and puts them in the mill of this abominable system.

‘You need not regard this letter as in any way private. This matter of disregard of all physiological considerations in training our boys for active services is the public question about which I care most, because it seems to me more important than any questions which are usually called political. And sympathising as I do with you in your desire to have an invincible navy, I am confident that all your efforts will be in vain if the human element continues to be disregarded as it is at present, both by the public authorities, and also, as far as I can at present judge, by the Navy League.’

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Broad Arrow*.

‘LORETTO, May 7, 1902.

‘. . . I always, in my evidence on Lord Sandhurst’s Commission and elsewhere, have deprecated the encouragement by marks of competitive athletics. If marks are given for any department of athletics at all, I think that a moderate performance should obtain the maximum, and that extraordinary performances should get no more. I would, personally, for instance, give full marks to any candidate who could cover thirty miles in seven hours, and pass his medical examination afterwards. I have no fad as to any particular species of athletics which would be included in the programme. I wish to see encouragement given to wholesome and attractive habits of life, and to make it very difficult, if not impossible, for any one to get into Sandhurst or Woolwich who has been kept at sedentary work for nine or ten hours a day, as many are at present; and I do not care by what means this result is brought about.

‘As to the vision and hearing tests, I could not speak from personal experience, but two papers of Mr. Galton, who is an expert in the matter, convinced me of their value and practicability.

‘I believe that the present system practically selects the best material for the army; but I also believe that it spoils it, to a great extent, in the process of preparation. But my great objection to the present system, from my position as schoolmaster, is the injury which it inflicts upon education from every point of view—physical, moral, and intellectual.’

Letters having reference chiefly to questions of curricula, and the respective claims of various subjects.

TO COLONEL TRENCH.

‘DRUMRUINIE,
‘ULLAPOOL, 19th July 1902.

‘My wife showed me your letter about Rollo, and I am infinitely obliged to you for taking so much trouble. I

have to admit with regret that if Rollo is to try for the Engineers, he must not go to Oxford, and that he must give up Greek, the two things going together, and I am very sorry. I cannot make out why the recent Commission left in Latin as compulsory and practically discouraged Greek. The Latin literature belongs to an age which had very much of our own faults of the exaltation of the surroundings of man over man himself, of inordinate luxury, spectacular athletics, town life increasing, country life diminishing, and departure from nature in everything from diet to costume. The Greek literature is not only superior in itself, but it constantly holds before us a simpler and a nobler standard of life, taste, and manners, and if it influences only a few minds, these are the minds which to some extent leaven society, and are the one chance of looking at it from outside, helping it to clear itself from those modern ideas and ways which are as certain to wreck our civilisation as similar causes were to wreck the Roman. But for the minds influenced by the great Greeks—Wordsworth, Ruskin, Tennyson, and (bar politics) Gladstone, our ideals would be lower than they are.

‘You must excuse my saying it, but I do not think that if you had even a few men high in rank in the army imbued with Greek taste, and Greek respect for nature and the human form, such a monstrous abuse as military uniform, and much which has been preposterous in military drill . . . could have existed. To keep out rather than to attract some few men imbued with this culture from the army seems to me an appalling error.

‘Do military men know why the Athenians won Marathon? It was at the bidding of some one (I know not who, but he saved civilisation) [that] they had not long before expelled the cumbrous Persian clothing which had become “the fashion.” When the Persians saw these unencumbered warriors rushing down the hill, they were paralysed. . . . Rational dress won Marathon. And so the first army which discards everything which obstructs the free action of limbs and lungs, and adopts dress and habits which are the best adapted to secure the greatest amount of mobility, will win the day anywhere.’

TO STANLEY TATHAM, Montana, Branksome Park,
Bournemouth.

‘INVERAN HOTEL,
‘SUTHERLAND, March 24, 1901.

‘Many thanks for writing to me. I would gladly throw up the sponge in the matter of classical education, if I could ensure the destruction of this accursed business of overstraining the minds and nerves of young boys, and depriving them of the oxygen and the exercise which are necessary for building up the vigorous bodies, the high spirits, and the sound, practical, lively brains which are eminently needed to maintain our supremacy at sea, and to perpetuate a race of human beings worth preserving.

‘But it seems to me that you, like nearly all people who attack Latin, ignore the case in its favour, which has nowhere been better stated than by Lord Goschen (*Essays and Addresses*—Andrew Elliot).

‘. . . I am bringing up my second boy to the fishery business, and I left him up to nineteen on our Classical Side, and then put him for a year on our really splendid Science Side. But our Science master, an enthusiast, says, “First, Latin and open air ; second, Mathematics and open air ; third, Physics and Chemistry and open air.”

‘I don’t agree about Pericles. He was a far greater man than any Englishman except Cromwell. Nor about Gracchus. He was the precursor and inspirer of modern reformers. It would be a great pity to let drop the great epochs and the great men. The Persian Wars and the Roman Revolution are as much nearer to us than the Wars of the Roses or Eighteenth Century as the intellect of the Athenian is superior to the intellect of the modern man in the street. Galton says that the average Athenian was as much our superior as we are to the Hottentot. Look at their superiority in art, in dress. Fancy Pericles in a black coat on a hot day, and high collar ! I dread lest the engineering spirit should subordinate man to his surroundings, and not even make them rational.’

TO G. G. COULTON.

‘NORTH ESK LODGE,
‘MUSSELBURGH, *December 3, 1901.*

‘. . . I assure you I have quite an open mind on this and all subjects. Lately we have developed a very large amount of true Science teaching here, but I am afraid we shall win no scholarships, because we use no text-books, but try to teach boys to find out things for themselves. I have a great and increasing belief in the value of scientific thought in education, and I have an article at present on the subject in the hands of Mr. Knowles, who I hope may print it. But I confess to this amount to a prejudice against modern languages as an educational instrument. The main object for learning them is to be able to talk and write them on the level of common life, and for this reason they must be learned mainly by imitation, which is not an educational process. But I think that what has most to do with my prejudices is that the Greeks especially appear to me to have been so infinitely more rational in their habits of life than modern nations are. It was enough to make one cry to see pictures of the revival of the Olympic Games with the black-coated, high-collared, and pointed-toed crowd. The Greeks at least kept their throats free, not cramping the breathing organs of man, woman, or child, and they kept their feet to the natural shape and not deformed. If there is any chance for rationality in the future, I think this chance is greatly helped by the lively presentation of the Greek ideal of man. What would Plato have said to choosing warriors by book-work?—and I have heard an eye-witness contrast the appearance of —— acting in the beautiful and rational costume of the Greeks in a Greek play, as contrasted with the same personality sweltering in black coat and gown on a broiling day. . . .

‘I do not think you will find that the man who goes into School and takes prayers in flannel shirt flying open at the neck and no coat or waistcoat is likely to be burdened with conservative prejudices. And so you see my prejudice

against modern languages is not of this kind. They are associated with the stove-loving, absurdly-costumed, and unhealthy-living people who speak them, for the Germans at least are much worse than we—they are not nearly so clean. Nausicaa would be an abomination and an object of ridicule to them, and they, like the Americans, live in stove-heated rooms, and have all the originality crushed out of life by police regulations which an Athenian would never have stood for a day.

‘Our modern language master was actually pulled up in Germany for cycling without his coat. My boys are punished by prefects, if they cycle in them on a hot day.

‘This, of course, has nothing to do with modern languages as an instrument of education, but surely it gives a far wider view of humanity for boys to read literature which is not impregnated with modern ideas.

‘As I am a reformer, I want to see all grammar papers knocked out, and all cram about the history of literature. I want to see a boy plunged into Homer. To have read through the *Odyssey* is an education in itself, and gives a perpetual distaste for the vulgarity which swarms upon the railway bookstalls. Will your French and German do this? . . .’

To H. B. TRISTRAM (O.L.), Vicegerent of Loretto.

‘INVERAN HOTEL,
‘SUTHERLAND, *March 27, 1902.*

‘. . . I met Andrew Lang the other day, and am doing a paper for him on Homeric nautical terms, and also on the Odysseus house problem, on which I think I am getting some light. The axes I can’t solve at all. What a blessing this has been here—first time for many years, work without worry or anxiety! Do you know *Odyssey*? I’m raving about it. It is in poetry what *Hamlet* is in drama, and *Bragelonne* in fiction—*facile princeps*.’

TO STANLEY TATHAM, Montana, Branksome Park,
Bournemouth.

‘NORTH ESK LODGE,
‘MUSSELBURGH, April 6, 1901.

‘We are at cross purposes. The reasoning in the paper which I return is purely mathematical. Did you ever read *The War of the Worlds*? The Martians there are the outcome of mathematics and engineering run wild. I care for the reasoning which has to do with probable matter—with man himself. Engineering and mechanics cannot make man one whit happier or better. Chloroform is worth steam and electricity put together.

‘I know Andrew Carnegie well by correspondence. He is one of my landlords. Brains like his rise to the top, with or without, or in spite of, any system of education. But take a percentage. Oxford First Classmen—not more than three or four thousand in number since 1800—have included Gladstone, Peel, Arnold, . . . Pusey, Froude, Arthur Stanley, Jowett, Cardwell, Goschen, Lightfoot, Temple, Shaftesbury, Liddon, who among them have probably influenced the brains and lives of Englishmen more than all the rest of their countrymen put together.

‘I am very sorry that any one ever invented submarine boats. They can’t rear our old splendid race of sailors. I suppose they are a necessity, in self-defence.

‘I send you a copy of a letter of mine to the *Scotsman*, from which you may gather my views on Science. Certainly the average boy does better in Science after being made to go through logical processes by means of Classics.

‘But the scientific or administrative brain is not the highest, unless, like Huxley’s, it happens to have also the higher qualities of imagination and sympathy. . . .

‘I sometimes wish engineers would fold their hands. They are desecrating the Jungfrau, they have vulgarised Snowdon, they have no sympathy with the qualities which are the outcome of quiet and solitude; they are in touch with the rush and hurry, the excessive luxury in eating, drinking, and decoration of modern life, its horrid lunches and functions, its dull, unpicturesque uniformity of custom

and costume. I had rather have the brain of a Ruskin than of an Archimedes.'

A letter dealing chiefly with methods of learning Greek.

TO H. B. TRISTRAM (O.L.), Vicegerent of Loretto.

'DUNKELD, November 4, 1891.

' . . . I was inspecting A——'s preparation of Homer this morning. As often before, I don't think our boys worry out [roots] half enough, so that, if they come to a word in a new meaning, they don't know it, from not having gripped the root. Nor do I think they should ever prepare with book on knee, or otherwise than at a table or reading-stand, making word notes. *E.g.*, he was satisfied with δαιτυμόνες, feasters. I showed him that his note should be "δαίω, divide (δαίεται ἡτορ), δαίς, feast ('portions'), δαίννυμι v.t." That's enough. A glance at such a note, in which there is not a superfluous word, gives a chart of the word mastered.

'Then again, he was hazy about the place-meaning of the prepositions, a thing which takes about five minutes to learn, once and for ever. Surely if a boy has the least bit of imagination, can't he see παρά, marching valiantly alongside; πρὸς, squaring up in front; πρό, in front with arms folded; ἀντί, at a distance, looking daggers; ἐπί, a helmet; ὑπό, a snake; ὑπέρ, Athene; κατά, a shower; ἀνά, the soul of the slain warrior; etc., etc.? Get —— to give "pictorial prepositions," only he would need to be told what they mean. . . .

'Now there's a good fellow. Thursday night we hold trumps, I hope, at 9.15. Yes, I would go, if needed, to Z—— or A——, though, of course, rather at home.

'I liked your sermon immensely. It would be better, I think, for first giving the old idea of δοῦλος, and showing that the old slave was a man often of potential equality and even greatness (slave), and not like the nigger—and then showing the force with which it would come home to the people of a city which teemed with *libertini*.

‘I think the best model for sermons is Liddon. His style is often, I think, naturally heavy. But he has a great art of putting a vivid picture before you, *e.g.*, of the wind, in his utterly mistaken view of “the wind bloweth where it listeth,” or of spring in another sermon. In fact, he almost always begins by drawing a picture.

‘You said some very good terse things, but I think the discourse too uniformly didactic. The didactic element is more forcible if it comes naturally out of a picture, or description, or comparison.

‘Well, I won’t give you any more to read.—Your loving
‘BROTHER.’

IV.

LETTERS ILLUSTRATING HIS RELIGIOUS ATTITUDE.

A confirmation letter, and a letter of practical advice.

TO A. M. PATERSON (then a boy of fourteen at Loretto,
and about to be confirmed).

‘INVERAN HOTEL,
‘SUTHERLAND, *Spring of 1882.*

‘You may suppose that I think very much of you fellows who are going to be confirmed, and there is no pleasure I have missed more from my enforced absence than that of taking the Confirmation boys. I know that that part of the preparation which any one else but yourselves can do has been carefully done by Mr. Cotes, but I can’t keep from saying something to you. Confirmation is a very good thing, and a very old thing, and I think many Presbyterians wish they hadn’t dropped it, even though I don’t myself fancy it is the same thing as the “laying on of hands” mentioned in the Bible. The great good of it is, it is a distinct mile-post in your lives. You have to declare yourselves that you are on the side of good, in the great struggle between good and evil. And though many boys will go to church, and say their prayers, as a matter of course, no

boy, except a very depraved one, will take the vow, as a matter of course.

‘There are two great dangers connected with it :—

‘1st. You (*i.e.* people generally) are apt to be excited for the time, and let your warm feelings cool down afterwards ; and then you are like the weeds in the parable of the sower which get burnt up. You have taken so much out of the soil of your hearts, and for no good.

‘2nd. It is apt with many to be too selfish a thing. They brood over their own feelings and their own beliefs, and their own sins and hopes, and there it ends. This leads to a very poor, useless sort of thing, miscalling itself religion, which deceives many people, and you won’t find any of it in the teaching of Jesus, if you look all through the Gospels.

‘It requires of you some things which, like the Catechism, I may put under three heads as shortly as I can :—

1st. To make your belief your own. You have no right to say “I do,” simply because you have been taught a thing in childhood, and would have been Mohammedans or Buddhists if you had been so brought up. And here I warn you that, when you grow up, you must be prepared to review many beliefs, as, *e.g.*, about the dates and nature of the books of the Bible, the creation, the flood, and other things on which knowledge has increased. But the belief required of you now is very simple, and yet it is the hinge on which all history and all personal character turns.

‘Do you believe that Jesus died, and rose from the dead, as a fact you have made sure of?

‘The evidence is very simple. Several hundred people were so sure they had seen him after he had risen that the belief was the centre and moving power of their lives, which they were ready to give up at any moment for their belief. And the improbability that such a thing would happen is taken away by the fact that Jesus is the only man whom his intimate friends ever believed to be perfectly sinless. If you grip this truth, and make it the centre of your lives, you may leave all questions of churches, doctrines, inspiration, sacraments, etc., as open questions. Whether or not Moses wrote Genesis, or whether man was made as he is or

came from lower animals, and lots of questions like them, may be interesting, but they don't affect Christianity a bit. Many young fellows haven't been warned of this, and then, when they find out, or think they find out, that something they were taught as children isn't true, their whole belief in Jesus goes with it. If you think and read for yourselves, religious difficulties will be sure to turn up. Just be always reminding yourselves—"But I know that Jesus rose and lives."

'Well, if you really hold this centre fortress of belief strongly, and don't bother yourselves about the outworks too much, the second and third things which Confirmation requires of you come as a matter of course.

'The 2nd is—Will you, with the help of a risen and living Jesus, try to get rid of your sins? This is what He died for, and I believe that He really helps millions who never heard of Him. But for yourselves think not of that general vague thing called sinfulness, but of your particular sins. There is no use turning up your eyes and calling yourselves "miserable sinners," and yet not admitting any particular things you are wrong in. You can all find plenty if you look for them. I won't, as I want to be brief, go into the ugly list. You can each fill it up for yourselves.

'And 3rd, Will you, with His help, try to lead an actively Christian life? This indeed comes, in one way, under the last head, for all not leading such a life is sin. This third head is, in one point of view, the sin of "leaving undone what you ought to have done"; but it is convenient to take it separately.

'Religion has been so far well defined as "something which enables us to do what we would not have done without it, for the good of our fellow-men." True, this is not all it does, for it also enables us to purify our own hearts. But it is the most often forgotten part of religion, and yet that on which Jesus most constantly insists in His words.

'There's an awful lot to be done, and there are far too few people trying to do it. Make up your minds, all of you, on Wednesday, that you are going into training, as it were, with those few. Even at School you may do something, and more as you rise in the School. The Devil has

got a lot of maxims which his adherents and admirers are not slow to use—"Mind your own business," "Boys will be boys." And of course they will sneer and scoff when any popular evil is attacked. But on Wednesday you are going to take a vow that you will be Christ's soldiers. Now soldiers can't expect to be always comfortable. In fact, they are liable to get badly wounded, are they not? But whenever you have the power and the chance, it becomes your plain duty at all risks to do good to the society in which you live. And you can't do more good than by putting down and exposing evil whenever you can, without being too nice as to whether you have a right to interfere or not. But at school you are not so much doing actual Christian work as getting ready to do it afterwards.

'I needn't tell you that, when you are gaining knowledge and training your memories and reason, you are thus getting ready. And so it is your Christian duty to work hard at school. Many do this from a very low motive (if taken alone), viz. that they may "get on," as it is called. But if you really mean your vow, you will wish to "get on" that you may get the power of doing good.

'In another way many of you might and don't prepare for doing good. You don't interest yourselves enough in public matters. That you may do good wisely, you ought now to be informing yourselves about such things as pauperism, the condition of people in large towns, healthy dwellings, especially for the poor, and lots of other questions of this kind.

'I fear that many of you, when you get newspapers, just read, after the matches, events and accidents, and would think reading about political and social matters "dry." They would soon not be dry to you, if you thought that you wished to do good to society, that you can't do good without knowledge, and that knowledge has to be slowly gained. In whatever situations you may be afterwards, you will have plenty of opportunities of doing good if you are looking out for them, and have got knowledge what to do.

'I would enter into more detail, but unfortunately the post is waiting—and so I will spare you more. But if the

root of the matter is in you, God will find you good work to do : you may be sure of that. And if you take your vow sincerely and intelligently on Wednesday ; not excitedly, but with that sort of quiet determination which has last in it, you have the root of the matter in you.

‘I have been longer than I meant to be, but perhaps you are in the mood for listening more than usual. I write to you as the highest up, but do you think you could get the others together quietly, and read them my letter on Tuesday night (or Wednesday morning)?—And believe me, your very affectionate friend and

HEAD.

‘*P.S.*—Nothing would be better for you than reading the life of a Christian worker of a manly sort. Ask Mr. Meldrum to get each of you a life of Charles Kingsley, from me, if it is published in one volume. If any of you have it, wait till I come back, and I’ll give something else.’

TO HIS ELDEST SON, GEO (then spending six months
at a horse ranch in Wyoming, U.S.A.).

‘NORTH ESK LODGE,

‘MUSSELBURGH, *April 17, 1896.*

‘MY DARLING GEO,—I read yours to Mammy before I saw “private,” but she and I are one, you know. You must keep off swearing. It’s just no good at all, though it means nothing. I have never got quite cured, though I learned it first at Oxford.

‘. . . You ought to shoot on Sunday. Here it would be “inexpedient” (1 Corinthians vi. 12). Sportsmen and their attendants would just make Sunday like other days.

‘. . . I doubt whether the state of St. John (Revelation i. 10) will be tenable for you even when you grow up, much less for [your companion] now. Remember, we have absolutely no Christian command about “Sabbath.” Romans xiv. 5, Colossians ii. 16 could not have been written if the Gentiles were to be bound by the Sabbath. And, as you have been told, there is no trace of such a thing. Constantine did not forbid recreation on Sundays. But in the place of all other rest days, when heathen holidays were lost, Sunday came in, as a day of rest from work. We ought

not therefore (on the authority of the whole Christian Church) to do anything to take away people's necessary rest on Sunday without good cause, and we should abstain from all amusements, even when lawful, which lead up to this. But if you set your face against things reasonable, if you are bound at all by what I may call "the red tape of religion," it will do unspeakable harm to your whole religious influence, which may be great.

'I fear my own hatred of red tape sometimes makes me drop things out of the parcel. But you need have no fear of that in this case.

'... You may keep [your companion] straight if you are genial, sportsmanlike, and rational. Remember that every needless "Thou shalt not" hurts influence.

'Had the fourth commandment been meant literally to apply to Gentiles, Paul would certainly have mentioned Sabbath-breaking among special things from which they should abstain, which he does not. All the rest are naturally moral, and so is the principle of rest and labour, and they are thus a convenient compendium of duty for us.

'I got 70 fish at Inveran, 970 lbs.

'Don't let it be said, as I have heard it is said, "There is no God out in Wyoming." I think your mission will be to Anglo-Saxons.—Your loving
DAD.'

The religious difficulty in schools.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Times*.

'LORETTO, September 5, 1902.

'The proposal of some of your correspondents that the representatives of various denominations should be allowed to come to a school at the same hour, and teach, each of them, the children of his own sect, appears to be admirably calculated to destroy all belief and respect for religion in children. On all other subjects they see their teachers in accord. What can be the result of the object-lesson of their differences in religion being forcibly obtruded before their

eyes, at a time when they must heartily wish that they were of the number of those happy ones whose parents have exempted them from all special religious teaching?

‘Of all ways of settling the religious difficulty this is the very worst, and I cannot conceive how any one with a particle of imagination, who tries to realise the situations which would occur, or who has the slightest knowledge of children as they are, could advocate such a proposal.

‘For my own part, I fail to comprehend the religious difficulty. We have had here, in quite recent times, children of parents of both Established Churches, of other Presbyterian Churches, of Congregationalists, of Wesleyans, of Baptists, of Roman Catholics, and of Unitarians. Our boys are of the public school age, and are far better able to understand the differences of the denominations than children of the Board School age. Yet the only special teaching of a denominational kind received by any of them is that Episcopal boys receive some special instruction from a clergyman before Confirmation (I take the chief part, *i.e.* the practical and undenominational, personally, though I am a layman), and Presbyterian boys often see their own ministers before their first communion, and Roman Catholic boys visit their priest at his own house occasionally. No other difference is made of any kind whatever, and for at least thirty years I have not had any practical experience of “the religious difficulty.” It is, of course, the case that boys may occasionally hear things said in school or elsewhere with which their parents do not agree. But in no case is a boy catechised about any dogma.

‘I consider that the differences of the sects ought not to be taught to boys. Our Lord certainly did not teach such things to His disciples, and I am certain that He did not teach them to the child who stood among them.

‘One practical difficulty is, I believe, felt by many earnest men, who yet do not wish disputed doctrines to be taught to immature minds. Some Board School masters are said to be cold-blooded cynics, destitute of religious beliefs or instincts of any kind. Such men are as unfit to be schoolmasters as the lover of foul air is who keeps his windows

shut. Let those who are responsible for elementary schools choose men of healthy habits and the warmth of character which generally goes along with them, and their religion will not be a contentious and separate item in the school programme, it will rather be the atmosphere which pervades the whole school life. And let those who wish for the teaching of distinctive dogmas teach them, or have them taught, at home, or at Sunday-schools. Even thus, personally, I regard them as unsuitable for children, till at least they are past the age of attendance at primary schools. And let the religious education of children be judged by its results ; by the absence of selfishness, and greediness, and jealousy, and false and ill-natured stories, bad language, and cigarette smoking ; by their kindness, courtesy, and growing desire to make the little corner of the world where their lot is cast purer and happier than it would have been without them. This I take to have been our Lord's ideal of religious education, and it should be ours. It is not that of the militant ecclesiastic on either side.'

The remaining letters of the section explain themselves.

TO HIS WIFE.

Undated.

' . . . Oh that introspection ! — has those nasty little Rit books. Manufactories of imaginary sins they are. These notions about "sin" are the root of much insanity. I prefer healthy "right" and "wrong," "kindness and unkindness," "truth and lies," to morbid notions of sins of thought, etc. The "Rit" people anyway fail in producing healthy human animals, such as we were meant to be. As to the opposite lot—well, they are "not so bad," as boys say ; but not quite according to nature either.'

TO HIS ELDEST SON, GEO.

' NORTH ESK LODGE,

' MUSSELBURGH, December 21, '96.

' MY OWN DARLING GEO,—. . . Don't bother yourself about your states of mind. I did a good deal, when I was

your age, and older—yes, and younger. Just do your next duty always, think more about other people than about yourself, try to improve the world, and give a blow, wherever you can, to any ignorant prejudice. But don't be introspective. . . .—Your loving
DADDY.'

TO GEORGE SMITH, Headmaster of Merchiston Castle School.

'NORTH ESK LODGE,
'MUSSELBURGH, *January 16, 1903.*

' . . . As to Rogerson,* his having the same thing before seems to show it is not malignant, which one would naturally have feared. But strange how he and Burgess should be smitten in ways so much alike! From the description I would expect intestinal ulcer. One only hopes that it may go away like the last time. If any improvement, or great change, do let me know.

'Rogerson is one of my Valhalla—not a large one—of men I know in the flesh. Here is such a true man. He has a sense of duty, and courage, and regardlessness of self and self-indulgence which I look up to from far below. I don't suppose that there ever was a system of belief so appalling and unthinkable in its logical outcome, and yet so strengthening and ennobling in its results, as Calvinism. Thank God it is not true, or I could never have another happy moment. But it is logical, if you grant stupendous untruths for axioms. And Rogerson's Calvinism grew, as he told me himself. It probably gives him great happiness now.'

TO THE REV. C. H. COTES (then a Master at Loretto).

'DUNKELD, *April 1888.*

'I really do think it would be good to have two celebrations, and the weather is improving; very little risk of continued winter in a few days. If people won't get up at 8.30 on Easter Day for such a purpose, it shows that the day brings no gladness for them, and their communicating later on is a mere formal matter.

* Dr. Rogerson was dying.—R. J. M.

‘Besides, the boys have never shown any reluctance to come to morning celebrations. On the contrary, there is a larger average attendance then than at midday.

‘I think, if I were you, I should put to them on Saturday night the great propriety there is in communicating early on Easter Day. He rose early on that day, and we ought not to be lie-a-beds, if we are keen to meet Him. . . .’

TO CARL SÖRENSEN (O.L.).

‘INVERAN HOTEL,

‘SUTHERLAND, February 19, 1890.

‘It is so good of you writing. I do hope you will go on with it, though I can’t always answer.

‘There was a little bit of puff in *Daily News*, I’ll send you when I get home, anent A. Lang and Loretto’s reputation for athletics having somewhat overshadowed its rightful claim to far higher things, etc., etc., making every one connected with that old hole quite vain.

‘It’s very jolly being here again. L—— and J—— are here. You remember how I used to bring up the overgrown animals! L—— is tremendously improved.

‘. . . You were very right in your last letter about a false note I struck in that “Jacob” sermon. I’ll alter it. I know there is something of what is good in “sentiment” which I miss; more of it may come, but it’s one of the things which can’t be forced. And you must remember that those who make the most touching appeals on religious subjects believe that immensely the greater part of mankind were deliberately made with a knowledge that they would be damned; and then make the picked few weep tears of holy selfishness with what they call their “Glorious Gospel.” That’s the “heaven and angel prattling” I was thinking of. I have no doubt the men who were reeling about here dead drunk to-day had heard lots of that at the funeral where they had been, and lifted up moist eyes towards the expected heaven of the selected Highlander. But there is something which is not humbug, and perhaps I am apt to hit both with the same shot.’

TO HIS WIFE.

(With regard to the *Pall Mall* revelations.)

‘STRATHAN,

‘LOCH INVER, August 1885.

‘DEAREST,—I am sending you *Pall Malls*. I don’t know what its motive power may be, but I know that it is in effect the most Christian newspaper I have ever come across, not only on the purity question, but on others like the “slaves of the tram-car,” and you will see how judicious its remarks are on Chamberlain. Yet, also, whatever Chamberlain may be, or may have been, one’s eyes cannot but be open to the fact that in his speeches he is touching more really important questions than the usual blatant rubbish of politicians.

‘That life shall be made purer, manlier, truer, cleaner, happier, is a matter far above all political wrangles, and nothing can prove how careless the upper classes have been about this, so long as they get the superfluities and encumbrances by which they are tyrannised and which they call luxuries, than the tone which their newspapers have taken about the *Pall Mall*. They have ignored it as long as they can, and now are beginning to abuse when they can’t ignore. If there is a paper which more than any other represents London society, it is *St. James’s Gazette*; and it has attacked the *Pall Mall* most fiercely. It is not the evils they are indignant at: it is that they have been brought to light, and the calm polished surface of things as they are disturbed. . . .

‘You must really forgive me for writing this way. I think Lot suffered greatly for sleeping so comfortably in Sodom, and we ought not to be comfortable when fearful wickedness is brought to light.

‘I am glad that so many clergy have spoken out, and yet comparatively how few; and what a fool’s paradise they have been living in, with their High, Low, and Broad controversies! Satan rejoices in getting up rows among those who ought to be the watchful sentinels of his enemies.

‘Everywhere one hears of fresh instances of the callousness of the “carriage folk” (to use a word which, of course, only partially characterises them). But I think the best instance I have seen of the fatuous blindness in which they are living is an article on deer forests by Cameron of Lochiel in the *Nineteenth* for August. Not only he, but all the people he has been talking over the subject with, have not had an inkling of the real nature of the grievance.

‘I am persuaded that the Churches of England and Scotland have a chance of remaining the National Churches if they will throw themselves heart and soul into the cause of purity, temperance, and health in its widest sense ; otherwise they will go.

‘There is a fine extract from a sermon by Farrar in one *Pall Mall*. Nothing here of any moment : in fact all the details of one’s personal life seem so very small when there is this moral earthquake. I am sure that Lot’s wife was thinking of a bonnet she had left behind. If she had been caring for Sodom, she wouldn’t have been salted.

‘*P.S.*—I really can only write of what I am mainly thinking of.’

TO HIS WIFE.

‘NORTH ESK LODGE,
MUSSELBURGH, May 6, 1897.

‘I think you miss the point of my aphorism. How can anything give what it has not got? The fact that Bible inspires, itself proves that it passes something on.

‘The mistake has been that of the usual matter-of-fact dunderhead. He has been unable to understand anything by “inspiration” but a soulless accuracy of detail. This the Bible has not got. It is in accuracy like any other book, just up to the knowledge and science of its writers, who, again, were children of their time. What it has more than any book in the world (though not at all alone among books, and in an infinitely varying degree from Corinthians i. 13 to Chronicles genealogies) is an inspiring power to elevate motive and to deepen and widen sympathy ; to

give vague but warm hopes of some glorious future inheritance; to diminish pain and increase happiness in this life. Here its inspiration is beyond the range of attack. But to make it depend upon date of Daniel, and actuality of particular prodigies (in recounting which it is like many other books which have not its inspiration), has been fighting a battle on a field where defeat is certain and deserved.'

FRAGMENT OF A LETTER TO HIS WIFE.

'DRUMRUINIE,
'ULLAPOOL, *July* 1900.'

'But there is a sad reflection in Miss Braddon (who says far more good things than she gets credit for)—"When all the foolishness is gone out of religion, the warmth and the comfort seem to go too." But then to keep in the foolishness is becoming impossible.

'Another thing she says: "It is indifference, and not love, that is blind."

'I have proposed an amendment to the definition of Genius: "Genius is an infinite capacity for taking the right kind of pains."

'I'm awfully sorry I've not been able to do justice to these boys. At first I took them regularly, and wrote an awful lot of letters, seldom getting more exercise than walking in a few miles to meet the carriage about 9.30 P.M., when I sent it in for letters. But I've been consistently "livery" for some time, and doctor (a good one from Ullapool, who came to see Whitelaw) told me to give my brain a rest and not to worry. I've cut off whisky too at his advice, even the half-nip which was my allowance—ditto smoking, almost entirely. He says, "Take heaps of exercise, and don't worry." I worried awfully about that Aldershot affair.'

Undated Fragment.

' . . . "Lourdes." Think of my being interested in several long chapters containing nothing but the story of

invalids and Sisters of Mercy—in a hot railway carriage! Those Lourdes phenomena are wonderful. The power of faith is certainly enormous. You know my view is, it is little consequence what you call the object of it—Buddha, Jupiter, Virgin, etc. It is the same thing. The historical accuracy of the believer is of no moment.

‘There is something exquisitely beautiful in that Virgin worship. I mean nothing heretical; of course I don’t believe historically in any immaculate conception. All these things are the forms under which it has pleased the Good Spirit that men, from time to time, should reverence the great fact of the supernatural. So in the Lord’s Supper. In the Middle Ages the bodily presence on the altar was a grand belief which kept society together. So was Luther’s Justification by Faith. The supernatural must not hinge on historical evidence, as I was taught in my boyhood. It is a real fact, recurring in a variety of equally true and equally erroneous forms.’

TO HIS WIFE.

‘DUNKELD, December 1901.

‘Bits from Ruskin, *Fors Clavigera* :—

“ . . . I pray that God would make all Jews honest Jews, all Turks honest Turks, all infidels honest infidels, and all evangelicals and heretics honest evangelicals and heretics; that so these Israelites in whom is no guile, Turks in whom is no guile, and so on, may in due time see the face, and know the power, of the King alike of Israel and Esau.”

“ I shall, with my best care, represent and enforce this clergyman’s teaching to my said evangelical readers, exactly as I would feel it my duty, if I were talking to a faithful Turk, to represent and enforce to him any passage of the Koran which was beyond all question true in its reference to practical life.”

‘About China, I believe our missionaries to be a most noble set of men. But if they had drunk in the spirit of

these words of Ruskin (which probably none of them ever read, being busy with the "crisis in the Church" and "South-west position," etc.), things would have gone differently. Of course they believe that there is a difference in kind between theological Christianity and other religions, and I don't.

'The one distinguishing doctrine of Christianity in my view is, that it extends the duty of increasing good and lessening evil to the whole human (and perhaps animal) race in all ages, all times, all countries; first and mainly for the life we live in this world, and next, and by close connection and result, for any life we may live afterwards.

'For between this life and any other there must be continuity and no sudden changes of nature or character. Therefore, for all nations their own religion; and what is good in all should be taken as the groundwork of teaching, broadened and glorified, as Christ did take, broaden, and glorify the law of Moses to the Jews. Had Christ been born in China, He would have taken Buddha and Confucius as His starting-points. Of that I am sure. True, His mere teaching failed, as I have shown you. Therefore He sacrificed Himself that over His dead body His troops might pass through the breach.

'Dear me! What I have written! I began with Ruskin, and have ended with a bit of myself. Sometimes I am thinking out something like this, and some Mrs. — writes about her boy disarranging everything to catch an earlier train—and I feel as if I had been hurled down sixty feet sheer into an asylum for idiots.'

TO HIS WIFE.

' March 1900.

'I quite believe in that Mr. Mott doing good. What I don't believe in is that the power of doing good is confined to any particular form of religion. But I wish all such people Godspeed. The people who wear barbed wire next their skin, and who burn lamps before images of the Virgin, do a lot of good. What I object to in them is that

they set up a low standard of veracity by breaking their ordination vows, and betraying the principles on which the Reformation was made. I think the mistake made by the other side is in treating these principles in themselves as things of primary importance. If right belief had been a thing of such importance, I am certain it would have been made clear which the right belief is; and that it is not clear is proved by the fact that learned and intelligent men differ after weighing evidence. Where I would probably fall out with Mr. Mott would be that he would be certain that his way of helping men to avoid immorality, etc., was the only way. But perhaps it is ordained that each earnest man should implicitly believe in his own way. Of course he would say it was not his way but God's way. Yes—that's the very question. Has God made any one way clearly the only one? I think you see what I am driving at. At present I really believe that people like Mr. Mott are doing most good with the average man. With men like —— they would do none, because they would constantly be using premises like the Atonement, and the Miraculous Incarnation, etc., which are points in question; nor would they, for similar reasons, with intelligent and earnest Romanists or Orientals. I wonder what R—— would say to this. Would it be new ground to her? Yet it is inevitable ground to all men who have thought out these big questions by modern lights.

'You might post my reference Bible. I forgot to pack it, and want to work out a sermon, for which the unreferenced Bible is little use. I don't believe what I preach is at variance with what Jesus of Nazareth preached, though it is with Paul's glosses and developments. . . .'

FRAGMENT OF LETTER.

'(?) 1880.

'To obey the known laws of God, and to be always searching for truth—it is pretty obvious to me that no supernatural revelation comes to us authenticated by such credentials as to necessitate belief in it. Why this is so I

can't tell. I believe the Apostles' Creed—I do, but I don't believe in it as I do in ventilation. Again, living for the good of others is a command of God speaking by the conscience. The reality of the Resurrection is mainly a question of historical evidence. If Paul was weakly credulous, there is little evidence. I don't think he was weakly credulous. If salvation had depended on belief, we wouldn't have been depending on Paul.'

TO CHARLES RUSSELL (then a Prefect at Loretto).

'HILLHEAD,
'DUNKELD, April 1, 1892.

'Of course I want you back. I shall miss you terribly when you go.

'Thanks for your letter much. It's the Atheism I'm most afraid of. He really must suppress it, or he may do a lot of harm to weak minds. In fact, I think he has done, from things I know. I shall speak very seriously to him about it. No one has any right to attack the only possible religion of his time without something to put in its place.

'I'm expecting my book out every day. It has an "Excursus" on the Davidic Psalms which I worked very hard at. Did I tell you? I forget. I think Cheyne and Driver's case is as weak as that against Homer. Did I tell you that Gom and I had read the *Odyssey*? *Odyssey*, *Hamlet*, *Bragelonne* are in my opinion the three greatest works of fiction. Oh I have such a lot to talk to you about. I had a grand two hours with A. Lang in the North. I've given him a lot of notes for his *Odyssey*. He is wrong about a lot of things. I said, "Why did you put Odysseus at the inner end of the μέγαρον? He was at the front door." "Oh," he said, "every one else put him there, so I put him at t' other end to see what would happen."

'I'll send you my book when I get it. I'm afraid I've been very rude to Cheyne. . . . I said he was as hard to find one's way about as the Muir of Rannoch in a fog! Do you know the Muir of Rannoch? I do. It's an awful place.'

TO HIS WIFE.

‘ GIFFORD, *July* 1893.

‘ I am so glad you slept. I was really anxious about you, and shall be glad for you when to-day is over. I came on some fine lines yesterday :—

‘ I hate the black negation of the bier,
And wish the dead, as happier than ourselves
And higher, having climbed one step beyond
Our village miseries, might be borne in white
To burial or to burning, hymned from hence
With songs in praise of death, and crowned with flowers.

But even thus I think my repulsion to public ceremonials in private matters would be unalterable. That is a matter of special idiosyncrasy, I suppose, however.

‘ . . . Yes, please have Prayer Books. I might have a short service (in bare feet, etc., for mankind) and a Jowett sermon. It is your books of family prayers which are so unreal to me. Perhaps it’s my fault. Whatever there is unreal to me in Prayer Book is mellowed by time, and I can take it in nineteenth-century light ; but not so when same thoughts are modernised in word. I am always trying for a tenable stand-point. The old stand-points are untenable, but the ‘ Kingdom of Heaven ’ remains unassailable.’

TO CHARLES RUSSELL (O.L.), (then an Undergraduate at Oxford).

‘ STRATHAN,
‘ LOCH INVER, *August* 1, 1894.

‘ You needn’t be afraid of criticising my position. A person who has got into a groove is the very man who needs to be made to turn round and think, and I always hold that old and young are the best critics of each other. I admit that I have drifted ; one position after another has become untenable. Is it then my duty to proclaim each successive phase to the School and to the public ? The result of this would be that none but bigots could be school-masters.

‘Many people who have no settled beliefs themselves don’t want their children unsettled. I myself would be very angry with any master who shook Geo’s belief in miracles. I would say he had betrayed his trust.

‘Remember that I do not believe supernatural Christianity to be untrue. I rather suspect that such things as the marvellously attested resurrection of Jesus are phenomena of the spiritual world which result from general laws which are only beginning to be recognised as such, and which are, and perhaps always will be, very imperfectly understood. Nay, I think that the personality of Jesus still exists, and is the most potent of all spiritual influences.

‘But supposing I thought all this unproved, and “miracles” untenable, as indeed I think I do, we come to the broader question—Is truth always to be proclaimed, or is falsehood never to be taken for granted, as a necessity of practical life? On what *a priori* grounds you or any one can assert this, I don’t know; but what I do know is that the assertion of it implies a *reductio ad absurdum*. Put yourself back five hundred years and suppose yourself possessed of modern knowledge. What would have been the result of your proclaiming it? You know that the only doubtful thing would have been the form of your ignominious death, and *cui bono*?—without even the satisfaction of dragging a fellow-victim to it. I certainly say—attack all falsehood when the time comes. If Darwin had lived two hundred years ago, he would have been wrong to publish *The Descent of Man*.* In fact, revolutions of all kinds are justified only by the probable beneficial result of success and a reasonable chance of it. Luther was absolutely right when he “created a disturbance.” The evil of Indulgences was so great, and the chance of stopping it so real, that he was justified. But would he have been justified in “creating the disturbance” to prove Justification by Faith? He would have deserved to be hung, at least.

‘Whether, indeed, supernatural religion has great influence on conduct in modern life is a question which is open

* Though I would much rather establish ‘Lorettonianism’ as a fact than establish any abstract truth, even Darwinism.—H. H. A.

to argument. But teachers of youth can only accept or retain their office on condition of assuming it to be such a guide. School is certainly not the place for reforms of theoretical opinions. I think, however, you admit this.

‘But is the issue immeasurably more important than conformity in dress or mode of life? I don’t think so. Happiness is the one end worth aiming at; and I think that Romanists, Protestants and Agnostics are equally happy—*qua* creed, unless any of them begin to have an uncomfortable anxiety about future fires or ice-pits in case they haven’t happened to hit the right -ism.

‘But people who take exercise and who don’t; who live in houses like Strathan cottage, or houses like the House of Commons; who move their limbs freely about in a flannel shirt, and who are swaddled and sweating in tight, close uniforms—are not equally happy. And, besides, in all such things there is no doubt about the truth. There is absolutely no argument the other way. Whereas, in all theoretical, philosophical, or spiritual questions, there is another side, and neither side is verifiable.

‘Can you say you are sure that Transubstantiation is not true? I am not. I don’t think so; but I don’t know it as I know that a stiff black hat is untrue, or that tea and Scotch buns *vice* Wallyfords* are untrue. And if any Stonyhurst master implied to the boys that Transubstantiation might be untrue, he would be doing a wicked thing; for with them, at least, he might shake a belief which, as a matter of fact, prevented them from doing things which would make them or others less happy afterwards.

‘Don’t you think that truth may be set too high in matters of opinion? To me, like other excellences, it is a mode, among others, of attaining happiness. Was I wrong because, in my early years at Loretto, I hadn’t coats off in school and compelled the wearing of caps? Or ought I now to come in to visitors at home barefooted, because I believe that feet indoors should be bare? Should I even generally advocate barefootedness? Or should I put Chrissy into knickerbockers without a skirt on top? All the

* A ‘Wallyford’—one of the Loretto wet-day runs.—R. J. M.

same, I have, as the main object of my life, the greater, and in the end, I hope, the absolute recognition of truth as supreme in modes of life and custom of all kinds. And I would do far more to bring this about than to persuade people of the true theory or genesis of miracles, even if I was sure of it. In fact, I would prefer a man or community of men who adopted Lorettonian habits and believed that Joshua stopped the sun, to a community of men who adopted London habits and had traced to the true source every story in the Bible. Because true habits would immensely increase the happiness of life, and true opinions would make hardly more difference than a red tie *vice* a black one. The sum-total of the matter is that I don't think it matters very much what men believe abstractedly, and when there is any *nexus* between belief and conduct (as there certainly is with some men, and more boys, and almost all girls), the belief is a sleeping dog which ought to be let lie.

'Might I ask you to keep this letter, and on your next visit, when we are not so full of "serving tables," we might discuss it further. Also as to your marvellous dictum that schoolmasters have less liberty than schoolboys.

'——'s female friends have been writing to him, and *paterfamilias* has intercepted their letters. Tableau.'

TO THE SAME.

'NORTH ESK LODGE,

'MUSSELBURGH, January 1, 1895.

'Wishing you happy New Year.

'I have no time to criticise Balfour's book,* notwithstanding enclosed. I have more than I can do. Such a lot of irons in fire. Briefly, however, its argument appears to me to be this: "God exists, because a spade doesn't." Q.E.D. I have no patience with that flimsy sort of stuff, its fabric permeated by wordy fallacies. I took a draught of Huxley afterwards, just as one sucks in air after being in a theatre or church.

'My own stand-point is not a flimsy one. It is this.

* *The Foundations of Belief*.—R. J. M.

We have abundant and increasing actual evidence of survival (witness Psychic Society proceedings *passim*). The Resurrection is one of the best attested cases, in harmony with the rest, but as immensely exceeding any of them in intensity, and persistency, and frequency of appearance as its subject exceeded other men in his personality. The object of this Person was the happiness of the world. He put a leaven into it which is working yet, and will lead up to the Kingdom of Heaven. All who work in his spirit for the betterment of the world, and no others, are members of this Kingdom. Paul understood so far that Christ had a universal aim, thereby differing from all other prophets who had local and limited aims; but he brought in a whole lot of dogmas which corrupted Christianity. . . . Christ would have rejected the Creeds with scorn.

‘Miracles never were. Survival, thought-reading, hypnotism, etc., are spiritual phenomena, occurring according to law like other things. But these laws are only now in the process of being investigated. This is my esoteric faith.

‘Do get your First, but don’t read yourself into unfitness for rowing. “Summaries” is a good idea—thanks.

‘Balfour is Platonic. I’m Aristotelian. Plato annoys me nearly as much as Mendelssohn does. I like what is direct, diatonic, tangible, not sentimental or artistic vapourings. If you want to get hold of a pellucid style read Huxley. . . .’

TO THE SAME (who had now finished his course at Oxford, with First-Class Honours in ‘Greats’).

‘NORTH ESX LODGE,
‘MUSSELBURGH, September 10, 1897.

‘I thought your plan was to go in hard for a Fellowship. You are then fighting without a defile in your rear, whatever you take to. It is so difficult to suggest anything definite, but is not a Fellowship first step?

‘A Fellowship at twenty-five
Made him the happiest man alive—

I know I used to feel that. I think the man I used to envy was West, Bursar of Lincoln, who has just died aged eighty-six. Such a quiet, monotonous, port-wine-and-whist life it used to be; and he, to me, was the type of it. Fellows used to seem to me such happy people; though I was made unhappy as an undergraduate. But alas! I fear Oxford has sadly changed. Less repose, more social rotting, less dreaming in common-room arm-chairs, etc.

‘Then you might try your wings at literature.’

‘I can’t understand your pessimist views. There is hardly a year of my life (since Oxford, which I hated) I would not gladly live over again. Something one certainly misses. If one had the old assured Puritan faith, and the lack of imagination to realise the perpetual hyper-roasting of all but a small fraction of one’s fellow-creatures, and one could only selfishly enjoy “Where everlasting Spring abides,” etc., all this pessimism would be impossible.’

‘One must only believe that there is a deep undercurrent which we cannot reach to with our plumb-lines, but bubbling up somewhere and somehow, if we only go straight ahead and do our best to make the world a happier place—which is Christianity, stripped of mysterious and supernatural (Is it?) surroundings, which may or may not be true, and were certainly kept very much in the background by the Founder.’

‘One step enough for me—

step into a Fellowship, and then look about you for a position of attack against suffering, abuse, the Devil, and Mrs. Grundy.’

TO HIS WIFE.

‘INVERSHIN,

‘SUTHERLAND, *April 13, 1898.*

‘. . . It really is not good for me to be much at home alone. Fact is, I brood too much. . . . And your letter has stirred up a good deal. You see, I can no more believe that the Fall is in any sense a true account of the origin and nature of sin than I can believe that two and two make five.’

Lyttelton and others lately tried to show in *Journal of Education* that there was a sense in which it was a true account. I read what they said eagerly. But it was all special pleading, and utterly hopeless. Well, what is based on the Fall? The whole of Christian theology as I was taught it, and as the Churches hold it.

‘Neither can I believe in what are usually called miracles. The belief in miracles prevails in all unscientific ages, but they don’t happen ; and all that we know of the minuteness and gradualness of the steps by which the present order of things has come about supports this. Yet I can thoroughly claim to be a Christian, *i.e.* I believe that Jesus Christ would have acknowledged me as a disciple, and as one trying to bring about the “Kingdom of Heaven” upon earth. As to anything further than this, I cannot be sure that I know anything more than I could have known had I been a devout Egyptian B.C. 3000, for we know how good they were from the *Book of the Dead*. Something prevented the veil as to the future being lifted then. Why not now as well as then? They were as able as we are to understand such a revelation. The plain doing good, either in individual cases, or in trying to wean society from something contrary to what I know to be true and good, that is my absolutely certain religion.

‘I can also conscientiously comply with a definite request made by the Divine preacher of the Kingdom of Heaven. I can also give boys religious lessons affecting their daily lives in hall. But if it comes to conducting irregular and voluntary services, not officially, or to attending churches where I may be jarred by hearing things confidently assumed which I believe to be out of the region of actuality or possibility, it is different. My position, even at School, is a difficult one ; not, so far as I see, impossible. But I don’t want to brood too much, and I brood less with boys with me. In fact, if I talk to them on such subjects, I find it does my own positive belief more good than anything else does.

‘. . . I have been enjoying Caird’s University Sermons very much. But I feel on hazy, uncertain ground. When

I get on Sutherland's "Origins," * I'm on firm, unquestionable ground. I dare say you understand my state of mind, dearest. My thoughts run chiefly on the biggest subjects. And what is my standing puzzle is how men like Bishop of Lincoln, on one side, and Bishop Ryle, on the other, devout, earnest, abounding in good works, can yet feel such confident assurance, both of them and all of them, about the things on which they differ. I can only feel such assurance on things on which the evidence is so clear that no one who has thoroughly weighed and studied it can doubt, *e.g.*, vaccination, the antiquity of man, and the iniquity of cruelty. I sometimes envy all good people, from Confucius to General Booth, their certitude about spiritual matters, but I can't be sure where the evidence is so conflicting that the most legal and logical minds differ.

'And this is what prevents my having the same sort of sympathy with devotional movements that I would have with a movement, *e.g.*, to teach the poor the benefit of fresh air, where I am sure. I've got my own beliefs, but can never feel sure about them. I don't see what right I have to be so, when others, with equal powers and advantages, have other beliefs; and they all fail of complete proof. I think the cocksureness of the clergy of both parties has done this for me more than anything else.'

The following paper was written for his son 'Geo,' then an undergraduate at Oxford, who had fallen into religious difficulties.

'December 1900.

'The Universe consists of three things, Matter, Energy, and Spirit, all definite and eternal, Spirit being the eternal creator and mover of the whole. Matter and energy are never either increased or diminished, nor in the very smallest particular do they ever depart from certain uniformities of action which we call laws. But they cannot explain life or consciousness, nor can they explain the purpose which, as if fighting against enormous obstacles, yet runs

* *The Origin and Growth of the Moral Instinct*, by A. Sutherland (Longmans).
—R. J. M.

through the ages, always making towards the happiness of living things. This pervasive Spirit is what we call God.

‘Life in this, and, no doubt, in every world, begins from very small beginnings, as it does in the human embryo. When it has the power of reflecting upon itself, it is called rational or spiritual. In this world rational or spiritual life exists only in man. Rational or spiritual life shows itself by reflecting purpose. When we find tools, there was man. When man has reflected, he has been aware of the Great Spirit, and then begins religion.

‘This was at least eighty thousand years ago. From then till now man has been seeking after a knowledge of the Great Spirit, under various names at their base.*

‘It is impossible to suppose that if there was a way of thinking about the Great Spirit a recognition of which would make the difference of happiness or misery after death, it would not have been so clearly made known that no doubt could be entertained. Yet in all ages men have felt no doubt that they had come to a knowledge of the only way which was right and true. This is evidently part of the divine purpose, that when man’s education is still going on, he shall believe he has found out the truth. But at most only one of these religions can, in this sense, be true. And if one were so, in this sense, it is inconceivable to my mind that it should not have been told to all men. It is equally inconceivable that, when it was so told, its meaning should have been left so doubtful that men should quarrel with each other, and kill each other, on account of differences which could not have existed, had the revelation been clear.

‘But take another view of revelation, as to the teaching of conduct. Here we are on sure ground. On the main points all religions agree in theory, though many have distorted their beliefs in practice, as the old sun-worshippers by immorality, and Christianity by persecution. But in knowledge of conduct, and of the Great Spirit who is the inspirer of right conduct, there has been the same sort of advance that there has been in knowledge about matter and energy.

* Text uncertain.—R. J. M.

‘What men like Bacon, and Darwin, and others did about the material world, Moses, Socrates, Buddha, Confucius, and others did for knowledge of the spiritual world. But such knowledge was imperfect and limited. Jesus Christ made it absolute. His doctrine of the Kingdom of Heaven is final. Christ took the partial and local discoveries (so to speak) of Moses and others, and made them universal. The Kingdom of Heaven, if realised, would indeed make life worth living. It would be a state of righteousness and rationality, and therefore of happiness.

‘Now all the good inspirations of men have proceeded from the Great Spirit. So far as he has dwelt in them, so far it is true, “I said, Ye are Gods.” But as Christ’s doctrine includes all these partial ones and is perfect, the Spirit dwelt in Christ entirely. “He was filled with all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” is not a doctrine, it is a fact. He was also filled with it morally. His greatest friend, John, never knew him to be guilty of sin. Christ also, as we might expect, solved the problem of survival in His person.

‘It was not miraculous, for it is what happens. Proofs of survival seem to crowd on us every day. But the evidence of Christ’s survival was unique and overpowering. Stories about the stone, and Thomas’s finger, etc., are evident myths of the sort we find in all times and in all religions. There are hundreds of better attested stories than these. But no survival ever was attested like that of Christ. If we insist on material survival, we are met with hopeless contradictions and impossibilities all round.

‘But the survival of personality is the one important thing which lies at the bottom of all the legends. Every one who has studied ecclesiastical history down to modern times knows how these legends spring up. Their history is understood. But survival is no miracle. It is normal and natural. Spirit dies not. It was the unique personality of Christ which made the evidence and power of His survival so stupendous. A hundred years ago it would probably have been inexpedient to seem to doubt miracles. The uniformity of nature was not then understood. Nor was the genesis of legend understood. For there are groups of

miracles as well attested as those of the Gospel, and infinitely better than the Old Testament miracles. And all we know of the absolute invariableness of what I may call the body of the Great Spirit, viz. matter and energy, makes the idea of miracle, to any one who studies nature by the light of modern science, inconceivable. If there was proof in the scientific sense, it would be otherwise, but there is none; or if there is proof for the Scripture miracles, there is quite as much for many ancient and mediaeval miracles, St. Augustine, *e.g.* Miracles are accordingly the stumbling-block in the way of the acceptance of Jesus Christ as what He was.

‘I don’t like the Creeds, for they go beyond any expressions which Christ used of Himself, or which were used about Him, so far as we can trust our records. The very few passages which seem to use the hard-and-fast Creed language are doubtful. The “Three Witnesses” is notoriously of later origin, when men tried to define and systematise. “I and My Father are one”; but also, “Ye are one with Me and I with you.” “God hath spoken to us by His Son”; “In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily”; “If He called them Gods (and the Scripture cannot be broken), say ye of Him whom the Father hath sanctified,” etc.—such expressions as these are the root from which the hard-and-fast doctrines of the Creeds spring.

‘I have worked very hard at this. I tremble for the world as I see the old beliefs simply crumbling away because they are absolutely untenable. They are the husk of Christianity. The kernel is the doctrine of the Kingdom of Heaven, and the duty of every man to do his best to bring it about, and the hope of a happy survival, founded on the survival of Jesus Christ.

‘This belief condemns no other religions. It regards them all as feeling after God. But it does away with Christianity appearing as an abnormal and unaccountable excrescence on the eighty thousand years of mankind, an excrescence out of harmony with all nature; a revelation, however, absolute, transparent, and self-evident as to conduct and the

ideal of life. The doctrines, however, which have grown out of it are as clearly of human origin as the essence of it is Divine. For while the latter is so clear that he who runs may read, the former are so obscure that men never did and never will agree about any one of them. The one has the cogency and certainty of the laws of nature, the other the instability and disputableness of human opinion.'

CHAPTER XXI

ILLNESS AND DEATH

IN the spring of 1901 Almond's health, hitherto, except in regard to the nervous weakness above mentioned, unusually robust, showed signs of giving way. He suffered much from his throat, and the boys formed a serious opinion of his condition when they saw him, for the first time, muffled in greatcoats, and wearing a comforter. The throat affection was attributed by the doctors to the presence of gout in the system. 'What have I done to deserve gout?' inquired the Head; and then added: 'It is just some of my vagabond Irish ancestors.' In the course of the following summer, however, his health seemed quite to regain its former tone, and in June 1902 he spoke of himself as not having been so well for years. He was now close upon seventy years of age, but so full of life that no one anticipated a sudden ending to his career. A certain physical failure there was, but for this the vividness of his intellectual interests and the growing success of his work consoled him. 'How one has to drop one thing after another!' he writes, 'and yet each year of life seems happier than the last.' It was indeed a singularly joyous old age.

In the autumn of 1902 there was a recurrence of the throat trouble. He preached in chapel (as it proved, for the last time) on the 28th of October. But the exertion aggravated the bronchial condition. A harassing cough followed, from which he recovered sufficiently to address the School at a last 'Double' a few days before Christmas. During January he grew slowly worse. Yet early in February, when the doctors held out hopes of convalescence, he caused inquiries to be made for some suitable country house, not too far from home and School, where he might

take long drives, and 'have out relays of boys all the summer.' The illness, however, assumed a more serious form, and about the middle of February he became aware that he was dying.

He accepted the summons with a tranquillity which surprised his friends. The nervous horror of death, when it assailed his loved ones, was found to have no place in his mind, when he had to face it for himself. 'I do not like to be beaten by my parents,' he said, half humorously, in allusion to the fact that his father had lived to seventy-eight, and his mother to eighty-seven. But, in general, he spoke of himself as one who had good reason to be satisfied in having lived to see so much of his work accomplished. To the School and all its concerns he remained as much attached as ever. He expressed the greatest satisfaction at the news of Mr. Tristram's engagement, which was announced about this time. To Tomlinson, who was among those admitted to see him, he communicated his pleasure at the fact that there were a number of new boys fixed for the coming term.

On the 16th of February he wrote a farewell letter to Mr. C. C. Cotterill, from which I quote a few sentences:—

'... My illness is a very strange one. It is hæmoptysis from the bronchial tubes, most troublesome and uncomfortable, and completely confining me to bed and adjacent arm-chair. The doctors (including A——, who is top of the tree in Edinburgh) say there is nothing dangerous in the present condition. But I think they are in the dark as to what is really wrong. It has gone on for weeks, better one day, worse another—certainly no tumour of any kind. I am thankful to have no pain.

'Tristram and our Science genius, Marzials, are quite competent to manage the School, and Paterson is splendid at Newfield, so really on that score I have no anxieties. And as for self, when a man is over seventy, he is a fool if he grumbles about a thing like this, when he might have so much worse endings.

'... Whatever happens, I have seen as much of my work done as mortal can reasonably expect.

‘Do let me hear all about yourself. But I knew you would like to know exactly how I was.’

Early in March he wrote to the head-boy :—

‘It is not a matter of life any longer, but I have to keep as quiet as I can. If I can’t see any of you, you will know it is not from want of caring. Now then, old chap, keep the School straight and pure ; and keep up our peculiar ways. There is more at the bottom of them than most of you think. I don’t care for Loretto being the strongest or cleverest School. I want it to be the most rational and the best. To yourself and the others my warmest love, and to those who have done anything to keep the School straight my deepest thanks.’ And then in letters very frail the postscript : ‘You do not know how much this wrench from my boys is costing me.’

On the 3rd of March the Head wrote to Bishop Mylne :—

‘MY DEAR LOUIE,—You would, I think, be shocked if the first intimation you saw were in the papers, and so I write to tell you that I believe I am sinking slowly but surely. It has been a chronic bronchial catarrh of which no one at first thought anything, but it has had a lot of complications, and is now, they say, a case of heart.

‘If things make it advisable for your boy to come here, write to Tristram. Doctor does not give me any reasonable hope.’

To this letter the Bishop sent the following very beautiful reply :—

‘MY DEAR ALMOND—my oldest friend in the world,—I am just back from church, where my heart was very full of you, after your letter received yesterday. I had supposed that the prayer for all who are afflicted or distressed would be the one to which the thought of you would be the most vividly present. But no—it was in the Thanksgiving that I found you had most part, for all that you have been allowed to do for, and to be to so many. The end, if it be indeed the end, is but the sum and master-touch to all that

has gone before it, and I prefer to dwell on that. I suppose that no influence directly religious would have really touched me at the time when your moral ideals, with very little of direct religion, so took hold of me. And then the new development in you came just when all in me was ready to respond to it, and go along with it. And so it has come that, little as we have seen of each other for these twenty-seven years, perhaps no one knows more deeply what you have been made to others because of what God had made Himself to you. To have been the channel for conveying to generation after generation of boys the sense of what we can enable them to be—dear old friend, to how many men is it given to be able to look back on such a record? You know what I must be thinking and feeling on your own behalf, but it is to this other that my thoughts recur and recur, and I can only say, God's Holy Name be blessed for all that it means. May it return to you a thousandfold "in the hour of death and in the Day of Judgment!"

On the 6th of March the Head received this letter, and was still able to reply to it in a few lines :—

‘DEAR LOUIE,—Of all letters I have received yours is the most welcome. Good-bye, my dearest of old friends. I am as comfortable as any dying man of seventy can be.—
Your most loving, H. H. A.’

The day before, he had written the following brief letter to a boy to whom he was much attached :—

‘DEAREST ———,—I suppose you know I am very near my end. Except for one or two bad nights, I have suffered very little. I have no wish to live longer. I could never be a strong man again, and I have done my best to follow my conscience, and that's the best any man can do. Keep straight and pure, old chap, and don't forget your loving friend and Head.’

Early on the morning of Saturday the 7th of March, as he reclined in an arm-chair in his bedroom, for he was unable to lie down, he asked the nurse who was arranging his

pillows whether her name was Jane. When she replied in the negative, 'I had a nurse Jane, when I was a little boy in Glasgow,' he said, 'and she was so good to me. I thought for the moment that you were she.' 'We'll call you "Miracle Jane,"' he added, after a pause, his mind still dwelling on the great problem. Not long after, the family gathered round his chair, all except 'Hadge,' who was absent in Rhodesia. As the end approached, Rollo, his youngest son, knelt at his feet. A look of pleasure passed over the Head's face, as he saw the boy kneeling there. This was the last sign of consciousness.

In accordance with the Head's own request a *post-mortem* examination was made. It was discovered that death was the result of a cancerous growth at the root of the left lung.

A few days before his death the Head had written for the School with his own hand the following 'express desires.' The document is highly characteristic in many ways, and shows, in particular, the firm and manly spirit in which he met his end :—

'It is the express desire of the Headmaster of Loretto that no interruption shall take place in the ordinary routine and occupations of the boys either in School or out of it. He particularly desires that the boys shall not be thrown into a condition of purposeless inactivity by cancelling or postponing matches or excursions of any kind. Respect to his name will be best shown by their avoiding idleness, either mental or physical, and by every one doing as well as possible everything which is desirable or lawful to be done at any other times, and also by keeping up the habits and institutions of the School, especially when they are opposed, on rational grounds, to the ordinary conventions of society. He has a great dislike to mourning customs, and where it would hurt the feelings of some to abolish them entirely, he hopes that in this case they may be reduced to a minimum. He would prefer no mourning being worn at his funeral by either men or boys, but hopes that at the most a black tie may be the extent of it. He hopes that the light may not be shut out from any houses by window-blinds being pulled down ; and if any of his kind friends were to think of expending a trifle on flowers, it would gratify him if any such sum should be sent instead to the Edinburgh Infirmary.'

It is interesting to note that, in response to this last

suggestion, sums amounting to about £40 were received by the Infirmary.

‘On Wednesday, March the 11th’ (I quote from the *Lorettonian* of the following week), ‘the Head was buried in Inveresk Churchyard. It had been fittingly decided that the Funeral Service should be begun in Loretto Chapel; and thither, on the previous day, the body had been brought. Early on the afternoon of the 11th those who were to pay the Head the last tribute began to assemble, and by a quarter to three the chapel was crowded with those whose sorrow was personal, while, outside, the townspeople of Musselburgh had gathered thickly.

‘Within, the scene was extraordinarily impressive. The chapel, at other times roomy enough, was now packed from wall to wall; and though, in accordance with the Head’s own wishes, there were no signs of mourning among the boys, the taller lines of the men dominated the interior with black. The coffin, draped in the School flag, and covered with three wreaths, rested at the beginning of the aisle; and, taking his stand by this, Bishop Mylne broke the deep stillness with the opening sentences from the Order for the Burial of the Dead. After the 90th Psalm had been sung by the choir to the Head’s own chant, the Rev. R. C. Craze read the Lesson, and with the end of the hymn, “Now the labourer’s task is o’er,” there came the throbbing of the “Dead March in Saul,” and the Head left his chapel for the last time.

‘In the thin, wintry sunlight the coffin was carried up the “Woody Walk” towards Loretto gate, and the mourners fell in behind those of his family; then the boys and masters of Loretto, as they had left their seats in chapel, and behind them old Lorettonians, the heads and representatives of the other great Scotch schools, and the many whom friendship and respect had led to the funeral of one who had well earned both. When the head of the procession had passed the Mound, others were still streaming from the chapel door. At the gate the coffin was placed upon an open bier draped in red; and, followed by the mourning coaches and a column of some four hundred

mourners, it passed between rows of townsfolk along the High Street. It was now about half-past three, and at the corner of Newbigging the front ranks on each side were composed of the town children, fresh from school.

‘The line climbed the hill to Inveresk churchyard, and so to the grave side. The Head’s own family and the pall-bearers stood round the grave, and the rest gathered behind them, while Bishop Mylne recited the remainder of the Burial Service in a voice clearly audible to all present. The last words were spoken, the ceremony was over ; and, as those nearest, after one final look, turned away and passed between the ranks that fell back for them, his boys pressed forward.’

The following verses, written by Mr. Henry Johnstone, and published in the same number of the *Lorettonian*, are so much in the spirit of the occasion that I transcribe them also here :—

Above the open grave and above the mourning throng
The skylark as he rose fill’d the air with sudden song :
First his notes rang out alone, as we stood in silence there,
And anon we heard them blend with the solemn voice of prayer,
As we laid the dead to rest—our Headmaster who had wrought
Faithfully for us and long, who had heart’ned us and taught
What the heart of man can suffer, what the will of man can dare,
That the hopeful are the wise and that only fools despair.
Grey and clouded was the sky, and the air was bleak and chill,
But the bird soar’d upward yet, an unconquerable will ;
And though no man’s art avail’d to declare the words he said,
The song was not of sorrow that he sang above the dead.

CHAPTER XXII

CONCLUSION

ALMOND's habits and personality have perhaps been sufficiently described, but a brief word remains to be said with regard to the nature and results of his work.

Of the fine and difficult art of training character he has left an admirable example, which it is hoped that these pages will, in some sort, make available for the profession at large. But in this department, though he had probably no equal among the schoolmasters of his time, he was treading in accustomed ways. He took the religious ideal which Arnold had bequeathed to the English public schools, and applied it with rare ability. In the ideal itself there was nothing new.

Nor need his attitude towards intellectual education detain us. His career, indeed, is a standing protest against the formalism and vulgarity with which the competitive principle has infected study; but in this province pre-occupation and early bias prevented his making any positive contribution to the ideas of his time.

The application of the best knowledge to the physical nurture of the young; the total elimination, from our practice with regard to this nurture, of convention, tradition, and rule of thumb—this is what he stands for in the first place. It is because of the value of his work in this sphere that I have claimed for him in education a place beside Arnold and Thring. I must not be understood to disparage the labours of others in the same field. No man holds a patent for his own ideas. Arnold was not the only headmaster of his day who endeavoured to Christianise a school. Thring was not alone of his generation in his efforts to surround boyhood with all that is beautiful and fit. But Thring and Arnold were the first, or among the first, to recognise the importance of the ideas with which their names are associated

They championed these ideas with prophetic fervour. They realised them with rare success in the actual life of their schools. So with Almond and his work in the application of science to the physical nurture of the young. The earliness, the ardour, the efficiency of his devotion to the cause have given him a special position in regard to it.

With reference to that further part of his effort to which he somewhat daringly gave the name of 'Lorettonianism' the case is different. His doctrine of 'rationality all round,' not only where health was obviously concerned but in the realm of daily habit as a whole, was a new thing in education. Nor was it a mere pious opinion. He worked it out, as we have seen, in the life of his School. The picture of the little community 'living visibly according to the dictates of right reason,' or at least trying to live so, will enlist the sympathies of all who are not sheep of Mrs. Grundy's fold. But only the fringes of the controversy could be directly touched at school. The scene of main struggle lay in the great world beyond. In his efforts to train his boys to play their part on this wider field, Almond strove to implant in them a temper of which, in the nature of things, but few minds are susceptible. How far he succeeded the future will show. In any case, among men engaged in education, he had this form of advocacy perhaps wholly to himself.

The improvement of the physical nurture of British youth and of the physical condition of the British people is now tardily recognised as the first of national questions for us. At the same time opinion is setting more and more strongly in the direction of greater reason and liberty with regard to everyday habit as a whole. It seems probable that the coming century will witness, in all classes of the community, an immense expansion of effort for the attainment of healthier and more rational ways of life. Herein, I take it, lies the importance of Almond's work, especially at the present hour. It was to the furtherance of these objects that he devoted the labours of forty years. He was the pioneer and prophet of the ideas which will inspire these imminent crusades.

If any reader of this volume should be inclined to censure him because at times his utterances are one-sided and overstrained, I would bid him beware of finding fault with a good thing of one kind because it is not a good thing of another. Almond was not a cool and judicious thinker. But he grasped certain neglected truths with extraordinary vigour, and advocated them with exceptional power. He did not diffuse his strength in many lines of effort. He limited himself chiefly to one. He belongs to the prophetic rather than to the philosophic type of mind. He exhibits that concentration of aim which, in difficult fields of action, alone succeeds.

In some aspects it is to be regretted that England was not the scene of his labours. The condition of opinion which he found in Scotland was specially unfavourable to him. Had Loretto been situated in the Home Counties, it is probable that it would have succeeded much sooner, and that its numbers would have been three times as large. In such a position he could scarcely have taken a dozen years to make a livelihood, and thirty to secure an audience for his message. Yet it may be doubted if an easier success and greater numbers would not have been fatal to the separateness of his work. A School of a hundred and thirty boys was permeable to his influence. A School of four hundred could hardly have been so. The stern discipline to which he was subjected had possibly its uses for him. His was perhaps one of those natures that work best under pressure. In any case, if the missionary should go where he is most required, then the Scotland of 1862 was a suitable home for him. And thus, as we see in the lives of so many, it may be that circumstances chose better for him than he could have chosen for himself; that here, at Loretto, in the near neighbourhood of the beautiful, conventional city, so kindly to talent, so unfriendly to genius, lay the best place of work for him; that not elsewhere could his long and faithful sowing have won so rich a harvest.

‘Call no man happy while he is yet alive,’ said Solon. And to men of Almond’s sort it is after death that the best

success comes. In nothing perhaps was he more fortunate than in the response which was made to proposals for the maintenance of the School. It was felt that the foundation of Loretto would be the best tribute to the Head. In the autumn of 1903 a Foundation Scheme was circulated among the old boys. Subscriptions were invited to a Memorial Fund, and also for shares in the Company which it was proposed to form to take over from Mrs. Almond the property of the School, which was valued at £21,000. Subscriptions to the Memorial Fund were paid into the share capital of the Company. £3718 was raised for the Memorial Fund, and £7798 in ordinary shares. The remainder of the purchase money was handed over to Mrs. Almond in the form of shares. The shares of the Memorial Fund, of course, bear no interest. Ordinary shares bear 4 per cent. interest; those of the principal shareholder, 5 per cent. As surplus profits accrue they are handed over to Trustees, who use them for the purchase of shares. When all the shares have been purchased, the School will be at once founded and endowed. Meanwhile the shareholders of the Company are Proprietors of the School, and the Directors of the Company are its Governing Body. Mr. C. J. G. Paterson is the Chairman of the Governing Body. Mr. T. B. Whitson is their Secretary. It is difficult for me to praise the Directors, as I am one of them myself. But it is certain that they are taking the keenest interest in the welfare of the School, and have already devoted much skilled attention to its interests, and spent considerable sums in improving its appliances and accommodation. Mr. Tristram is Headmaster. The School is prospering under the quiet vigour of his management. When I visited it the other day, I observed that the faces of the boys were as bright and fresh as ever. As for us old Lorettonians, we are interesting merely because we once were Loretto boys. It is to Loretto boys, to successive generations of Loretto boys, that I would dedicate this book. In so far as it is worthy of the Head, it is intended to be a kind of *Æneid* for them.

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